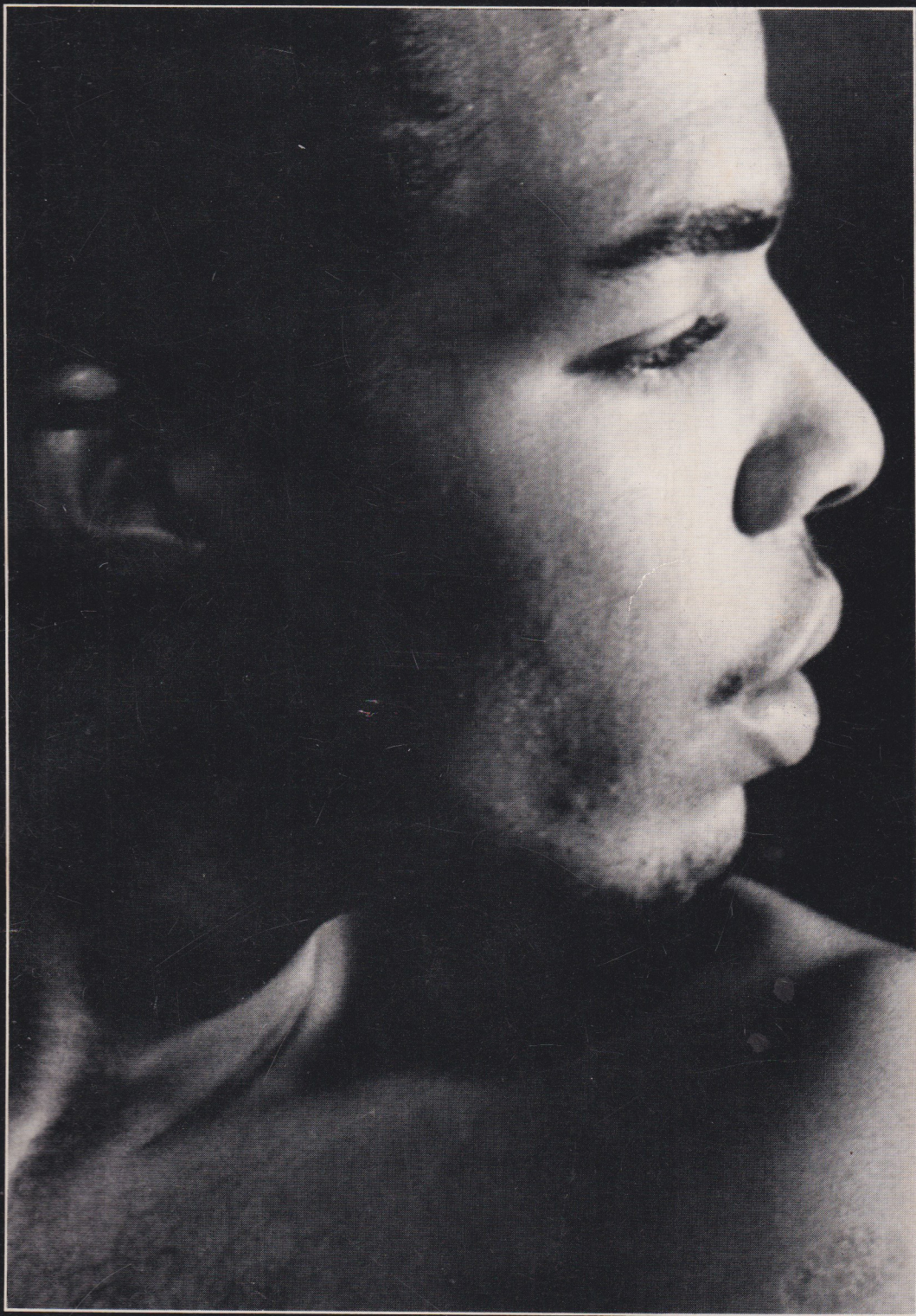


BGM

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BGM

THE BLACKLIGHT PRESS

BGM

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Submissions BGM 5:

We are seeking autobiography, non-fiction, short fiction and essays. All manuscripts are welcome but must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope or they cannot be returned.

At this time we are not accepting any poetry.

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is an artist and graphic designer. He began creating Black characters about ten years ago. "I was always trying to create Black superheros for the comics to offset the fact that we seldom saw any in the media in general." A native of Chicago, he currently lives in the San Francisco area.

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is a resident of Washington D.C. *Breakfast for Kumal* is his first published short story from a collection currently in progress.

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is a native of Washington, D.C. and now makes his home in Atlanta, Georgia. This is his second appearance in BGM.

Dodger Freeman

is a native of Chicago and now lives in a suburb of Washington D.C.

This issue of BGM is dedicated to the memory and spirit of Malcom X.

I N S I D E

Dodger Freeman
The Autobiography of A Black Gay Male

4

Reads

7

Rupert Kinnard
Divva Touche' Flambe' & The Brown Bomber

8

Reina DuVal
The Cost Of Living

10

Sidney Brinkley
AIDS & Men Of Color

14

Miles K. Bell
When A Friend Dies

18

BlackJack

34

From The Editor

20

Jlbaro

21

The BGM Awards

29

Bob Williams
Breakfast for Kumal

38

About The Blacklight Press

47

Back Copies

48



The

creator blessed his

mother and father with a bronze wonder in 1954. He was their first born. It was not a happy home. His father gambled, drank and could not, or would not, hold a job. He was never there to show his son how to catch a ball, roll marbles, or spin a top. He was always running from family responsibility.

Fortunately, his mother was a determined career woman and home provider. She was always busy with family obligations and endured the pain that life afforded Blacks in the then segregated city of Chicago.

He heard everything, saw everything: his parents "doing it," while everyone was thought to be asleep, their arguing about money for food and rent, arguments which usually ended with his father beating his mother because "daddy was drunk, again."

His mother would stay up all night, often alone. Her friends asked "When you gonna leave that man?" He hid how frightened he was, how desperate he was for a loving family. But he had faith. His mother had taught him to pray "God is great, God is good..." He felt new love was on the way.

In time he was joined by brothers and sisters. But he felt his life was different from theirs. They seemed like strangers. He often fought them but he could not fight the Big Boy that pissed on him as a prank in the alley or punched him at school.

Yet, for some strange reason, he idolized the Big Boy and carried a smile for him. One day, the Big

Auto biography

Boy showed him his "thing." He wasn't sure what to do or say but he felt close to a "man" for the first time. To him, the Big Boy was the man, the "big man." He thought at last love, "New Love" was here. But that turned out to be an isolated incident.

Eventually his family moved, this time without his father. It seemed as if they moved every year but there never seemed to be any happiness, no matter where they moved. Something was always wrong.

As he moved from place to place, he would look for new love. New Big Boys with sex secrets. Somehow he felt the twin of love, lust, would comfort him.

He entered Catholic school and

for the next few years they attempted to make him feel guilty about life. Made curiosity a filthy illness of the mind. Damnation was the punishment for male to male pleasure.

But he had already seen too much of the dark side of life. He sought the Big Boy, with the Big Love. The Big Boy would protect him from the others who fought him and called him names. He wanted to share something with other boys but what?

As for girls, he only wanted friendship from them. He gave them trinkets to buy their friendship. Sometimes it worked. Other times they sneered at him and called him "sissy," behind his back, if he was lucky. So, he gave the impression of not caring and sheltered himself with art and music, impris-

of a Black

oned in his own "room full of mirrors," as Jimi Hendrix would say later.

The Big Boys he worshipped didn't seem to know he was around. But oh, he was aware of them. He saw them in the bathroom playing with their dicks and talking dirty. There was no mystery now as to who had the Big Love.

He was now at an age where he challenged every school of thought. He was tired of the gothic teachings of Catholicism and of this supposed "son of God" who was both human and superior to humans.

He questioned the "all knowing" spokesperson, the nun. His questions led to silence and disturbed looks. He was branded a "trouble maker" especially during religious study.

He eventually transferred to public school where, in contrast, there seemed to be total anarchy. Everyone ran wild in the streets and even wilder in the classroom. He was the new kid who didn't talk much and drew pictures all the time. He was soon labeled a "chump-ass sissy."

However, there was one Big Boy, who was considered tough, that liked him because of his talent. Once he was chosen for, of all things, a football game during recess. The Big Boys were playing rough tag football, which was almost like tackle, but because they were on concrete they knew better.

Male

him, touching his cheek and calling him "sweetheart." The fellas roared with laughter. But secretly, he lust-ed for the bully with his wide shoulders, big thighs, large Afro, dark skin and deep set eyes. What an animal like attraction that Black Adonis had.

During his sophomore year there were new values in the air. The Black Student Union formed and announced their first meeting. He decided to go. Everyone wore large Afros, mirrored sun glasses and talked about some sort of "revolution." He thought it wild and bizarre. But maybe this was the place where misfits like him went when all else failed.

So he adopted the philosophy of Malcom X and the music of Jimi Hendrix. Later that summer he came across a group who were into Black theatre. This was new and different. They said "be this, 'cause that is counter revolutionary" which almost made sense to him because the Big Boy said "it's all about change."

Yet, in the back of his mind he often had images of having sex with the dominant male figure. He

Gay

Someone had thrown the football to him and that particular Big Boy said, in a protective voice, "don't hurt him, he can draw real good." For a second he was in the game with "the fellas." He never forgot that day.

High school for him was a new experience. There were more Big Boys than he could ever imagine. The look of raw masculinity was everywhere. He stared at the jocks during the quiet moments of study hall or in the library and went deep into his hidden world of fantasy.

He was called "fag" for the first time by the local bully. He was only mildly frightened when the guy came over to his desk with some of the fellas and poked fun at

by Dodger Freeman

held his attention at the meetings on unity and nation building. He admired the revolutionary brother for his striking good looks and big dick.

When he graduated from high school his mother was so proud and he made plans to enter college. He visited several and decided on one in Chicago. He met awesome guys there and facsimiles thereof. Still, his sexual experiences were confined to fantasizing while masturbating.

During that time he came across a Black religious cult. He thought he had found his true calling, which was not to fight for any cause without the Lord's backing. God's word and shield would be his salvation from sin. He left college and joined this group of militant evangelists.

After two years of commitment to this cause he met a Big Boy in this circle. This new member knew how to test his will power. One night, in his room, the two were talking when the guy laid back on the bed displaying a tremendous erection.

He cautiously moved towards the man and began stroking his dick. This was the first time and he was scared. The man pulled out what seemed to be 12 inch black banana. A lion roared in his heart and he thought, *fuck it*. This was not the time to be scared or nervous. The sensation was electric as he discovered the pleasures of "69" for the first time.

This torrid and insatiable affair ended as quickly as it had begun. It endured all of three weeks. But now Pandora's box was open and on tour. There was no longer a mystery whenever he thought about men, sexuality and emotions. He now knew what he liked and what he wanted. "The Life" summoned him to life. He left the religious group and returned home, to the real world.

By now his family were dispersed

"Now Pandora's box was open and on tour. There was no longer a mystery whenever he thought about men, sexuality and emotions. He now knew what he liked and what he wanted. The Life summoned him to life."

all over the country. He was alone again. But this time it was different. He was more self confident with a new self image and clearer outlook on life.

He registered at the YMCA and moved into a small room. While in the bathroom shaving one morning a muscular, coffee colored man walked in and began shaving also. The two of them exchanged nods. That evening, while he sat on the window sill in the hallway, the silent man walked over and they began to talk.

The man expressed how tired he was of the "Y" and how it was like a prison because we couldn't have guests past 11 pm. He agreed and said he was looking for an apartment. Some days later he told his new found buddy his apartment had come through. They celebrated with burgers and sodas.

He told him that he didn't have to

stay at the Y" if he didn't want to, that he could come over for dinner some evenings, and even spend the night. Apparently it was the opportunity the man had been waiting for; he asked if he could spend the night with him that night.

He had been caught totally by surprise. Guardedly, he asked him if he was gay. The man pulled him to him and they kissed. He thought he had found the man who would end his search for happiness. That night was intense and physical. Love was here he thought, Real Love.

However, what followed was lies and deceptions. The fairy tale lasted long enough for him to see just what "love" meant in the gay life style, in the modern world.

BGM

THE POWER OF RACE

Higher Ground
by Caryl Phillips
Viking.

This young man from St. Kitts is gaining a reputation as one of the finest young writers around. "Higher Ground" is made up of three novellas that deal with race. "Heartland" is the tale of an African man who acts as translator and guide for English slavers. "The Cargo Rap" takes place in contemporary America and is the story of an African American man locked up in a southern prison. His tale is told in a series of letters he writes to his family. The extraordinary "Higher Ground" is about a polish jewish woman who fled her homeland before the Nazis rose to power and her experiences in England.

NEVER FORGET

Before Freedom,
When I Just Can Remember
John F. Blair, Publisher

Two events that will forever mar the history of America is slavery and the genocide of Native Americans This is the oral history of 27 former slaves from South Carolina interviewed during the Depression by the Federal Writer's Project. Memories of the Klan "They would watch you just like a chicken rooster watching for a worm," mixed with the cruelty of white masters, "Dont let a slave be catch with pencil and paper. That was a major crime. You might as well had killed your marster or missus." A disturbing and facinating account of how African Americans, through cunning, strength and sheer will power survived slavery.

READS

BY LOVE OBSESSED

Love in the time of Cholera
by Gabriel Garcia Marquez
Penguin

This is the tale of a romantic obsession that lasts over fifty years. It takes place in South America near the turn of the century. Garcia Marquez displays a deep insight into the nature of love. However, that the story is so thouroughly engrossing is just the half of it, the other is the way it is told. This is one of the finest examples of the art of writing one is likely to ever find. It has been on the best seller list for months, deservedly so. This is a masterpiece.

HOW I GOT OVER

About Courage
by Mickey C. Fleming
Holloway House

In this autobiography Fleming tells about his life as a ward of the court at 22 months, after his mother was committed to a mental institutuion, and his subsequent growing up Black, poor and gay in Washington D.C.

A WELCOME VISIT

A Visitation Of Spirits
by Randall Kenan
Grove Press

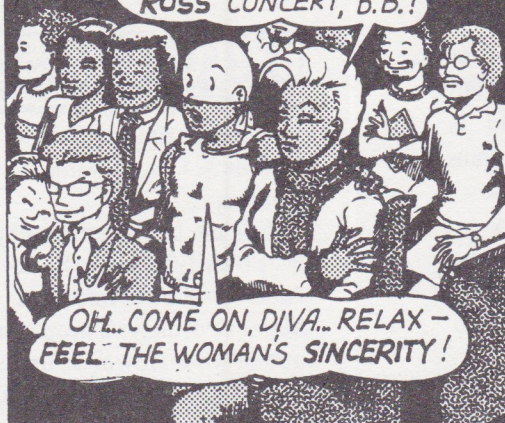
"A Visitation of Spirits" Randall Kenan's first novel, takes place in a small town in North Carolina. Through blending the supernatural with the natural he tells the tale of the Cross family and how the weight of family tradition affects two cousins: James Green, who returns from college to be a minister and Horace Cross, who must confront a growing awareness of being gay in a Southern Black Baptist environment.

DIVA TOUCHE' FLAMBE' and THE BROWN BOMBER

REACH OUT AND TOUCH
SOMEBODY'S HAND...

I CAN'T BELIEVE I LET
YOU DRAG ME TO A DIANA
ROSS CONCERT, B.B.!

OH... COME ON, DIVA... RELAX -
FEEL THE WOMAN'S SINCERITY!



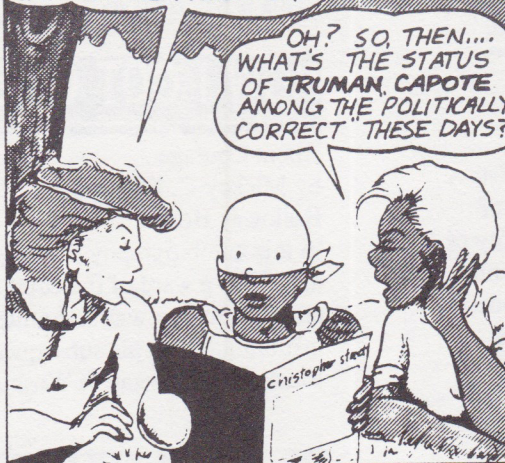
MAKE THIS WORLD A BETTER PLACE,
IF YOU CAN... OH... THIS IS MY
FAVORITE PART OF THE SHOW! I
WANT YOU TO TURN TO THE PERSON
NEXT TO YOU...



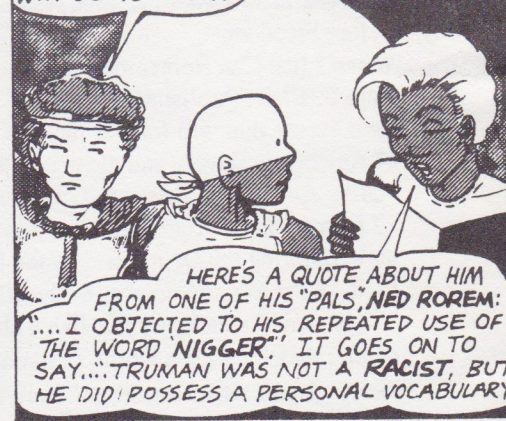
REACH OUT... TOUCH THEM... OH...
THAT'S IT... CARESS THEM! OH...
YOU LOOK GOOD... GO AHEAD...
FONDLE THEM...

YOU KNOW IT'S "POLITICALLY INCORRECT"
TO ACKNOWLEDGE LIKING EDDIE MURPHY
THESE DAYS, AFTER HE REFERRED TO
GAY MEN AS FAGGOTS!

OH? SO, THEN....
WHAT'S THE STATUS
OF TRUMAN, CAPOTE
AMONG THE POLITICALLY
CORRECT THESE DAYS?

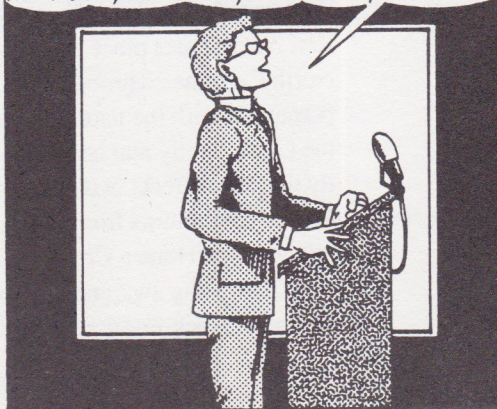


WHAT? NATURALLY
HE'S CONSIDERED
ONE OF OUR
GREATEST
LITERARY HEROES!
WHY DO YOU ASK?

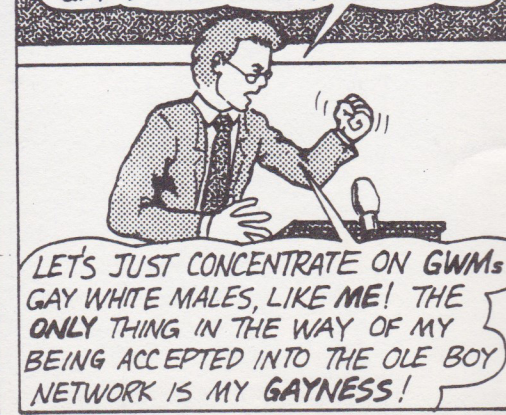


HERE'S A QUOTE ABOUT HIM
FROM ONE OF HIS "PALS," NED ROREM:
"...I OBJECTED TO HIS REPEATED USE OF
THE WORD 'NIGGER.'" IT GOES ON TO
SAY... TRUMAN WAS NOT A RACIST, BUT
HE DID! POSSESS A PERSONAL VOCABULARY

AS A GAY LEADER FIGHTING FOR GAY
RIGHTS, I THINK IT'S UNWISE TO
DWELL ON THE PROBLEMS OF LESBIANS,
PEOPLE OF COLOR, THE HANDICAPPED,
THE AGED, ETCETERA, ETCETERA, ETCETERA.

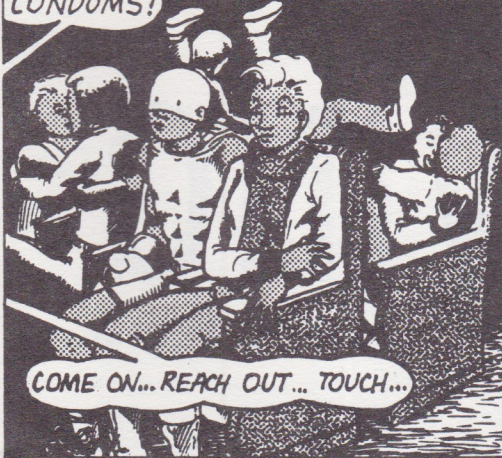


IN FACT... I DON'T THINK WE SHOULD
LINGER ON THE RIGHTS OF
EMBARRASSING DRAG QUEENS AND
THE LEATHER BOYS! HELL, LET'S
GET DOWN TO BRASS TACKS....



LET'S JUST CONCENTRATE ON GWMs-
GAY WHITE MALES, LIKE ME! THE
ONLY THING IN THE WAY OF MY
BEING ACCEPTED INTO THE OLE BOY
NETWORK IS MY GAYNESS!

YES! OH...YOU'VE GOT IT! DO WHAT-
EVER COMES NATURALLY...BUT DO IT
SAFELY! THE USHERS ARE AMONG
YOU, PASSING OUT FREE, AUTOGRAPHED
CONDOMS!



COME ON...REACH OUT... TOUCH...

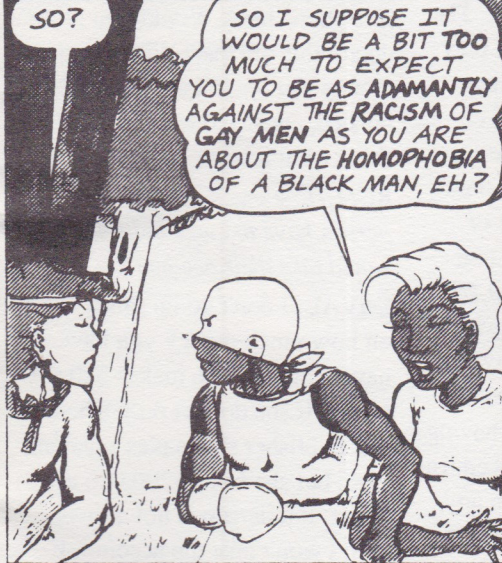
OH... LOOK AROUND... YOU ALL
LOOK BEAUTIFUL! I LOVE YOU!
REACH OUT AND TOUCH SOMEBODY...



I THINK I'D BETTER LEAVE BEFORE
I REACH OUT AND SLAP SOMEBODY!

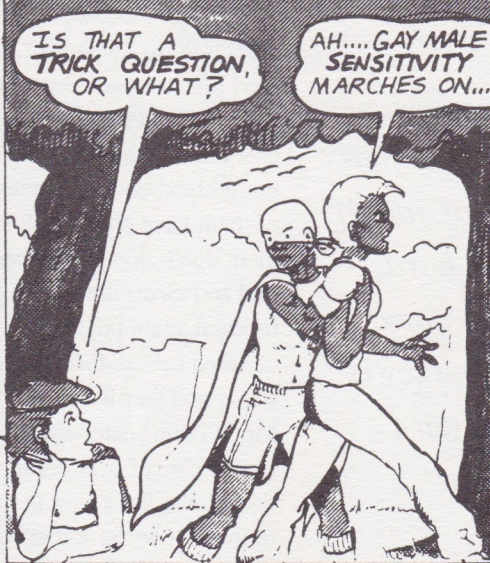
SO?

SO I SUPPOSE IT
WOULD BE A BIT TOO
MUCH TO EXPECT
YOU TO BE AS ADAMANTLY
AGAINST THE RACISM OF
GAY MEN AS YOU ARE
ABOUT THE HOMOPHOBIA
OF A BLACK MAN, EH?

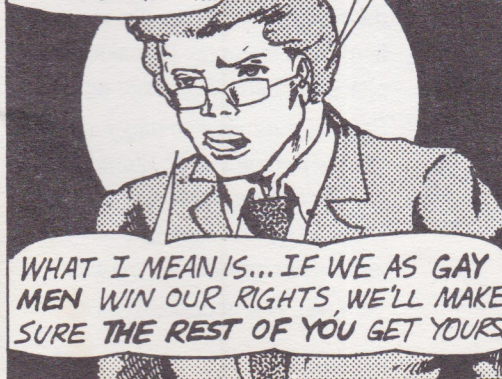


IS THAT A
TRICK QUESTION,
OR WHAT?

AH.... GAY MALE
SENSITIVITY
MARCHES ON....

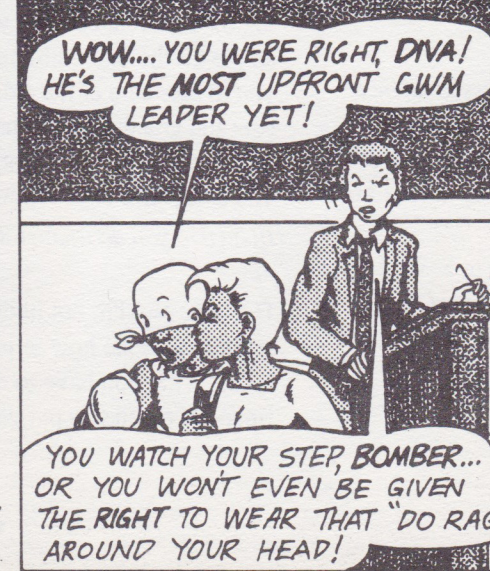


I DESERVE THE RIGHT TO NOT HAVE
HOMOPHOBIA PREVENT ME FROM
JOINING MY BROTHERS IN OPEN
EXPRESSIONS OF RACISM, SEXISM
AND....OOPS... I... HEH, HEH... I GOT
CARRIED AWAY...



WHAT I MEAN IS... IF WE AS GAY
MEN WIN OUR RIGHTS, WE'LL MAKE
SURE THE REST OF YOU GET YOURS!

WOW.... YOU WERE RIGHT, DIVA!
HE'S THE MOST UPFRONT GWM
LEADER YET!



YOU WATCH YOUR STEP, BOMBER...
OR YOU WON'T EVEN BE GIVEN
THE RIGHT TO WEAR THAT "DO RAG"
AROUND YOUR HEAD!

The COST of LIVING

An interview with stockbroker Reina DuVal on investing for the future.

“
If you're young
you've got 30 to 35 years
of work ahead of you. If
you're working hard,
you better make darn
sure that your money is
working just as hard.
That's important.”

BGM: If a single person came to you with no investments, no pension plan, and wanted to plan for retirement, what kind of advice would you give?

DuVAL: You have to look at a person's goals, but at worse they should be saving ten percent of

their yearly income, at worse. The ideal is 20 to 25 percent. But they can't afford to save less than ten percent. I have a lot of single clients but that doesn't mean they are not without encumbrances. Some of them have children. Some of them don't. Some have been married and swear they will never get married again but they still got the children calling them mommy and daddy and they have to be provided for. If I don't deal with your having to take care of your children's education you're not going to have any retirement because that's going to drain you dry. Or, if you're not paying for children, because you are single all the other siblings expect you to take care of the elderly parents and grandparents. That happens all the time. They look at you as if you don't have expenditures.

BGM: Do you do financial planning?

DuVAL: No. I'm not interested in telling someone how to pay their bills. What you have to do to be a financial planner is put your name

in a phone book. Would you go to a doctor that did that? Why do your money that way? I am a licensed, bonded, registered representative, that's what a stock broker is.

BGM: How much money would a person have to make before you would take their account?

DuVAL: I don't go on salary. I go on how much money you have. I have a writer who makes \$10,000 a year. If she doesn't drop a book on the publisher she makes squat all year, but she has a \$200,000 account. If a person is not a saver then I won't take the account. If you're somebody who makes 25 or 30 thousand a year then goes downtown to buy shoes and clothing all of the time, I can't help you. I can get you [a return of] 10 percent [on your money] but you've got to have the money. Some people walk in here and expect me to make miracles and I can't. I manage money.

BGM: Would your strategy depend upon a person's age? Would someone in their mid-twenties approach it one way, and someone in their mid-forties approach it another?

DuVAL: Not necessarily. The dif-

ference between 40 and 65 is still 25 years. What would make more of a difference is what that person's obligations were. What do they see coming up in front of them? Are they going to retire at 65 or earlier? What are their expenses? When you start getting into the fifties, 55 and up, that's when you start looking at things differently. I didn't start until I was 35. I wasted a lot of money. In 1977 I had \$38,000 worth of revolving debt. I'm talking about department stores and the like. There's only so much furniture you can put into your house. Once your body stops changing there's only so many clothes you can buy. There's a point at which a person doesn't need to have all those expenditures. You can't be a consumer and a producer too. You're either one or the other. Our entire economy is based on getting you to want something. Let's suppose a person is making \$50,000 a year at retirement. Now they're going to be making \$33,000 a year because, generally, you have 2/3 of your income when you retire. But, you've been used to 50. Now you've got all this free time and less money. Sitting at home unable to go to the movie because the price has doubled and everything else has doubled. All those places you had planned to see, how are you going to get there, on your looks? In order to make \$50,000 at 10 percent you'll need \$500,000. There is no risk-less investment at 10 percent. So, you're looking at an investment that pays 7 to 8 percent which means you'll need \$650 to \$700,000 in a portfolio to make that same \$50,000.

BGM: What do you mean, one would need \$650 to \$700 thousand in a portfolio?

DuVAL: In a low risk income bearing investment. If a person at 65

continues on page 12

Buying a House with your Lover

To avoid the pitfalls you'll need to understand the terms.

When lovers decide to buy a house together one of the decisions to be made is how ownership is going to be divided. If one is putting up substantially more money than the other, ownership may reflect that. Perhaps one will own 75 percent and the other 25 percent which is considered "Tenants in Common." Or ownership may be divided 50-50 which is considered "Joint Tenancy."

Regardless of the ownership arrangement many want it set up that if one dies the property would go to the surviving partner or "Right of Survivorship." However, right of survivorship can only exist under one condition: Joint Tenancy.

Under tenant-in-common, ownership does not automatically pass to the survivor. It is subject to the deceased's will. And if he didn't leave a will, there is a possibility his portion of the property will go to his next of kin. To have automatic right of survivorship you must have equal ownership.

Many men think joint tenancy with right of survivorship offers the best protection in case the co-owner dies. But it is a fragile agreement

that that can be easily terminated, often unknowingly. And it can happen without the knowledge or permission of the other partner.

In most states, a joint tenancy is terminated if one joint tenant deeds his interest to a third party. For example you and your lover own a house and he decides to take out a loan from a third party, be it a bank, finance company or friend, and uses his half ownership of the property as security for the loan. Once he deeds his half of the house it creates a tenancy-in-common with the third party thus voiding any right of survivorship. It would not matter if he paid off the debt and had his portion of the property deeded back to him. It does not automatically revert back to joint tenancy.

In some states, when a husband and wife own property in joint tenancy both spouses must consent in writing before the co-ownership can be terminated. However, if you are not legally married to the co-owner then that does not apply. When purchasing property together, lovers should consult an attorney and prepare a "partnership agreement" which would offer greater protection to both partners.

BGM

"Rich people take our money all the time. We keep thinking small. We gotta stop that. If you think small you're going to go nowhere."

continued from page 11

said "I don't want any risk," or "I want low risk for just basic fixed income." That's how much money they'll need invested in order to make \$50,000. So, if you've got \$10,000 saved, what do you think you're going to have. Zip! You have to have savings!

BGM: You mention savings but savings accounts don't offer a great return.

DuVAL: I didn't say "savings account." I said "savings." There's a difference. I "save" 20 percent of

my income but I don't have a "savings account."

BGM: If not a savings account then what are you talking about?

DuVAL: Again, you have to look at a person's goals but I'm talking about saving in a Mutual Fund. If you save \$600 a month compounded at 15% how much money do you think you would have in ten years?

BGM: I can't even guess.

DuVAL: \$76,000. And you can start changing your life with \$76,000.

BGM: What kind of investment would give you a return of 15 percent?

DuVAL: A good mutual fund averages somewhere between 12 and 15 percent. There are 85 mutual funds in this country that have existed 30 years or more. Only eight of them have outperformed the Dow Jones and the Standard and Poors average consistently over any ten year period. No matter which way you toss the years around they have always outperformed all our indices that we look to to measure that type of stuff. With that kind of consistency that's okay for me to plug every piece of change I can find into that fund.

BGM: One can go to them with \$600 a month and say "I want to be a part of this.?"

DuVAL: Sure, I set it up all the time. I have one person who started out that way. In two years he has \$27,600 and that's not bad. That's post crash. I have one woman who came in here with \$20,000 in September of 1985. In January of 1987 she took out \$16,000 to put down on a new house and she still had 20. She had two damn good years. That generally doesn't happen. Usu-

ally it would take four years to do that instead of two.

BGM: Aren't there some risks involved in all of this?

DuVAL: The business cycle is five years. You are going to have three good and two lousy. I guarantee it. I don't know when the two lousy years are going to start otherwise I would be on my yacht. But you will always have two years that are bad. When you are having your two bad years so is everybody else. The question is, are your's going to be as bad as the market or not as bad as the market. Yes, you will lose a little money in those two years but it will always come around to such a degree that you will still do better than if you put your money in a CD.

BGM: What are Mutual Funds?

DuVAL: A Mutual Fund is a management company that takes your money and invests it for you. But every mutual fund has a different investment objective. Whether a mutual fund is good for a person depends on a person's goals and objectives. I have some clients that don't own any stock and don't have any mutual funds, just real estate portfolios. For my people in mutual funds my goal is to get them to \$150,000 at that point I get them their own portfolio manager at one and a half percent. On a \$100,000 it costs about four and a half percent. The more money you have the less it costs you.

BGM: What do you mean by "costs four and a half percent?"

DuVAL: For total management fees. They have all the fees buried in the prospectus where you can't

see them. You can't understand the prospectus anyway. You certainly can't understand the fee structure. But it's in there. They'll say "okay we made 10 percent on this investment; we'll give you 8 percent." You can either pay up front, pay as you go or pay at the end, but you pay.

BGM: How about CD's? (Certificates of Deposit)

DUVALL: I think they're ridiculous. Poor people buy them. And if you're young the last thing you need is a CD. Always watch what the wealthy people are doing with their money. Wealthy people don't put all their money in CD's.

There's got to be a reason. If you're earning eight percent on your money and the inflation rate is four and a half percent you're left with three and a half percent. And you pay 28 percent minimum tax on that. So what have you got? You're never going to be anything more than a salaried employee. Making nothing and living off of it. You're working hard and your money isn't. The poor people give the banks the money for the CD and the bank lends the money to the wealthy people for a fee and makes the spread between what they give the poor people and what they charge the wealthy people. Why be a dope and give your money to the bank for a CD. The banks are pushing CD's because they know many people are stupid enough to buy them. I don't have a CD and won't buy one for at least 15 or 20 years. I'm trying to build assets. I could rollover and die waiting for a CD to go somewhere. I

would buy a treasury bill over a CD any day. A treasury bill is safer and it's backed by the federal government. The people that lost their money in the Maryland S&L's had CD's they didn't have treasury bills.

BGM: Aren't CD's guaranteed?

DUVALL: They might be guaranteed but let's say you have several thousand dollars in a CD when your bank fails. Your money will be tied up in court waiting for you to get your "guarantee" and when you do get your money you don't get the interest you lost while they held it up in court two years. If a person is looking for safety I prefer a treasury bill. The higher quality of risk is a treasury. Its more liquid, you don't have any early withdrawal problems and all that.

BGM: Is there a minimum amount that must be invested in a treasury bill?

DUVALL: \$10,000. Here is a case where a person may want to look at a treasury bill. Suppose you want to buy a house several months from now and you have several thousands of dollars together for the down payment. That money has to be intact and available quickly for when you go to closing. It is convenient and most useful to put it in a treasury bill. You can get full maturity just about anytime, with no state tax, while your money is earning interest.

BGM: Any final investment advice you would like to give?

DUVALL: If you're young you've got 30 to 35 years of work ahead of you. If you're working hard, you better make damn sure that your money is working just as hard. That's important. Do what the peo-

“We are not willing to take risks, but we are taking risks with our future. Take risks. You get paid for risks. You don't get paid for sitting on your kiester playing it safe.”

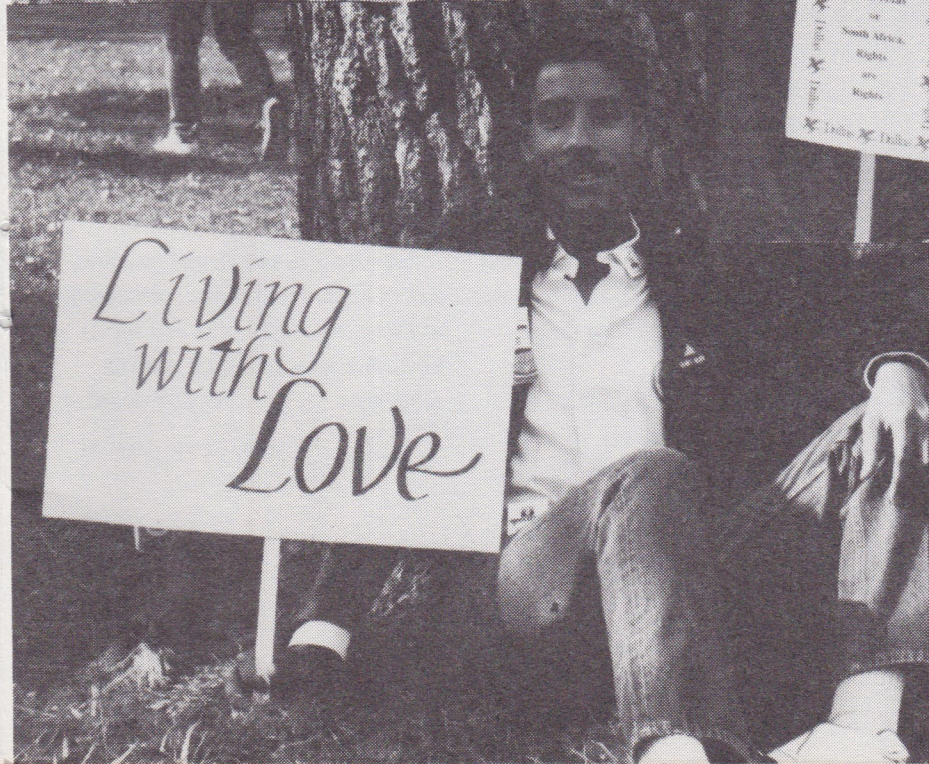
ple with the cash are doing. Rich people take our money all the time. We keep thinking small. We have to stop that. If you think small you're going to go nowhere. We are not willing to take risks, but we are taking risks with our future. Take risks. You get paid for risks. You don't get paid for sitting on your kiester playing it safe.

BGM

AIDS AND MEN OF COLOR

It was around 1981 that word of a mysterious illness first began to spread. The medical world was baffled as to its nature. However, a profile of those suffering from what would be later identified as a deadly viral infection began to emerge: They were men. They were white. They were gay. In the following months all attention focused on that specific group as television, magazines and newspapers ran stories about their lives and sexual practices. African Americans and other minorities, just as the rest of America, sat back and watched the unfolding events, secure that whatever this "thing" was would not affect us, after all, it was a white gay disease.

by Sidney Brinkley



But that sense of security began to slowly erode as relatives, friends and acquaintances from among our own began to get ill and die. By mid 1989 the total reported cases of AIDS were just over 100,000* and no part of society was beyond its reach.

The largest part of that figure, nearly 62,000 cases, represents sexual transmission, male to male sexual transmission: 45,000 white gay men. 10,000 African-American gay men. 6000 Hispanic gay men. 460 Asian gay men and 65 American Indian gay men.

While the percentages for Asian and American Indian gays are relatively small, African-American gay men make up ten percent of the total cases. Hispanic gay men, six percent. White gay men comprise 45 percent of the total cases.

While male to male sexual transmission is high among both African Americans and Hispanics, the number one reason for the spread of AIDS among both groups is IV drug use. A campaign to educate addicts about the dangers of sharing needles began months ago in several cities.

Still, the numbers for that group are rising and will continue to do so because the basic problem is the addiction, a powerful factor that overrules all rational thought. An addict in the midst of a craving and in severe pain is not going to postpone shooting up to look for a clean needle.

However, while gay male sexual transmission will likely remain a very deadly second place, the long

term prognosis for African-American gay men, in general, is good for two reasons. One, the leading cause of AIDS, IV drug use, is primarily a straight male activity. Two, a considerable number of gay men possess qualities, such as education and a greater overall awareness, which make it easier to modify or change risky sexual behaviour.

In addition, many have watched a number of friends and acquaintances die and that has had a profound effect. They know this is not an illness to be taken lightly; this is about life and death.

Whose Disease Is It?

AIDS has never been just another disease. From the beginning it had a specific owner. It's always been viewed as somebody's disease. If African-Americans and other minorities have the notion that AIDS is a white gay disease, we could hardly be faulted for that is exactly how it was portrayed in the early days by NBC, CBS and ABC.

We were bombarded with stories about sexually obsessed white gay men in bathhouses, bars and bathrooms. Before it was over we knew more than we cared to know about their sexual practices. However, after a few months that changed as attention turned towards Blacks, first the Haitians then Africans.

Newspapers ran virtual novellas full of elaborate theories, presented as facts, involving pigs and monkeys. Blacks were being used as scapegoats by a chorus composed of

continued on page 34

*U.S. statistics are from the Center for Disease Control surveillance report of July 1989. Global figures are from the World Health Organization report of June 1989 except where noted otherwise.

Protecting yourself from AIDS requires more than just slipping on a condom before sex. Nutrition is very important. A healthy, well maintained body has a far better chance of fighting off, or coping with *any* infection. In addition, because you are a man you'll need different nutrients throughout your life. To keep your penis, testicles and related organs healthy and functioning normally, and for all around sexual vitality, you'll need selenium, zinc, potassium and magnesium. For example, zinc keeps prostate healthy, may raise testosterone levels, sperm count and improve potency. Selenium, which is lost when you ejaculate, helps regulate sexual functioning.

YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM

- **Protein:** necessary to build immune cells
- **Fats:** Essential fats necessary for membranes of immune cells
- **Key vitamins for the immune system:**
- **Beta-carotene/Vitamin A:** Works with the immune system to inhibit cells transformed by viruses, energizes many immune cells, prevents, or slows the development of cancers of the skin, bladder, throat and lung.
- **Vitamin B6:** Helps produce antibodies. Necessary for thymus and spleen, two critical immune system organs. Low levels may cause immune tissues to shrink.
- **Vitamin C:** Necessary for antibody production. Increases weight of vital immune tissues, thymus, lymph nodes. Helps thymus prepare blood cells to fight bacteria and viruses.
- **Vitamin E:** Strengthens immune cells, makes them more able to fight microorganisms.
- **Key minerals for your immune system:**
- **Magnesium:** Boosts immune cells' fighting actions.
- **Zinc:** Boosts every area of immune health.
- **Iron:** Helps strengthen infection-fighting white blood cells.
- **Selenium:** Potent antioxidant. Protects against cancers of the skin, rectum, colon and bladder.

BODY MASS

- From a recent report by the National Institutes of Health is a personalized method to find out if you are at the right weight.
- You'll need a calculator.
- 1. How much do you weigh nude? _____
- To get metric equivalent in kilos, divide by 2.2 _____
- 2. How many inches tall are you? _____
- To get metric equivalent in cm, divide by 39.4 _____
- 3. Multiply that number by itself. _____
- 4. Divide (1) by (3). This is your body mass. _____
- B.M. less than 21 Underweight
- B.M. 22-24 Optimal weight
- B.M. 28-32 Overweight
- B.M. over 31 Obese

When A Friend Dies

We first met on a cool Friday in April of 1981. My first impression of him was not favorable. He appeared semi-androgynous. He had softened eyebrows, a hint of eyeliner and faint blush on his otherwise handsomely chiseled face. He was dressed in Calvin Klein jeans and a sweater, worn backwards.

I kept my distance and barely talked to the skinny punk who was munching on french fries with a vengeance.

I remember signaling my friend

Bill, who had just introduced us, to hurry eating. Extremely closeted, I wanted to lose sight of this queen.

However, they were classmates at Woodrow Wilson Sr. High and Bill wanted to talk with him. His name was Bobby and he had "come out" long ago. He proclaimed full knowledge of Washington's best Black gay bars. He even offered to function as a tour guide. Bill went out with him that night. I took Metro home.

I did not see him again until the summer of the following year. By

then, I had become more open to developing platonic relationships with guys "in the life." We stumbled upon one another at a party. Gone were the arched eyebrows, make up and odd clothes. The silly, flaming queen I had met a year ago had vanished. We began talking and dancing. I found him Intelligent, interesting and warm.

For weeks following the party, we had endless talk sessions over the telephone. We talked about everything: the bars, records, men, and divas.

For the remainder of that summer, Bobby, Bill and myself were a street running trio. The Clubhouse was our second home. There, we danced and partied until sunrise and then went out for breakfast. When Bill became preoccupied with a new lover my friendship with Bobby became deeper.

We had a touch stone type of relationship. We confided in one another whole heartedly, or so I thought. At the end of that summer, Bobby attended the University of the District of Columbia and I entered Howard University and began a relationship with an older man.

I had little free time and our friendship lapsed a bit. But, on occasions, we would touch base with one another. Then I heard that he had withdrawn from college and had begun working.

One morning I got a frantic phone call from him at 4 am. He was crying and making little sense. I tried to calm him down. Desperate for money, he confessed that he worked as a prostitute while between jobs. He had gone home with

a guy he picked up. The man assumed he was a woman.

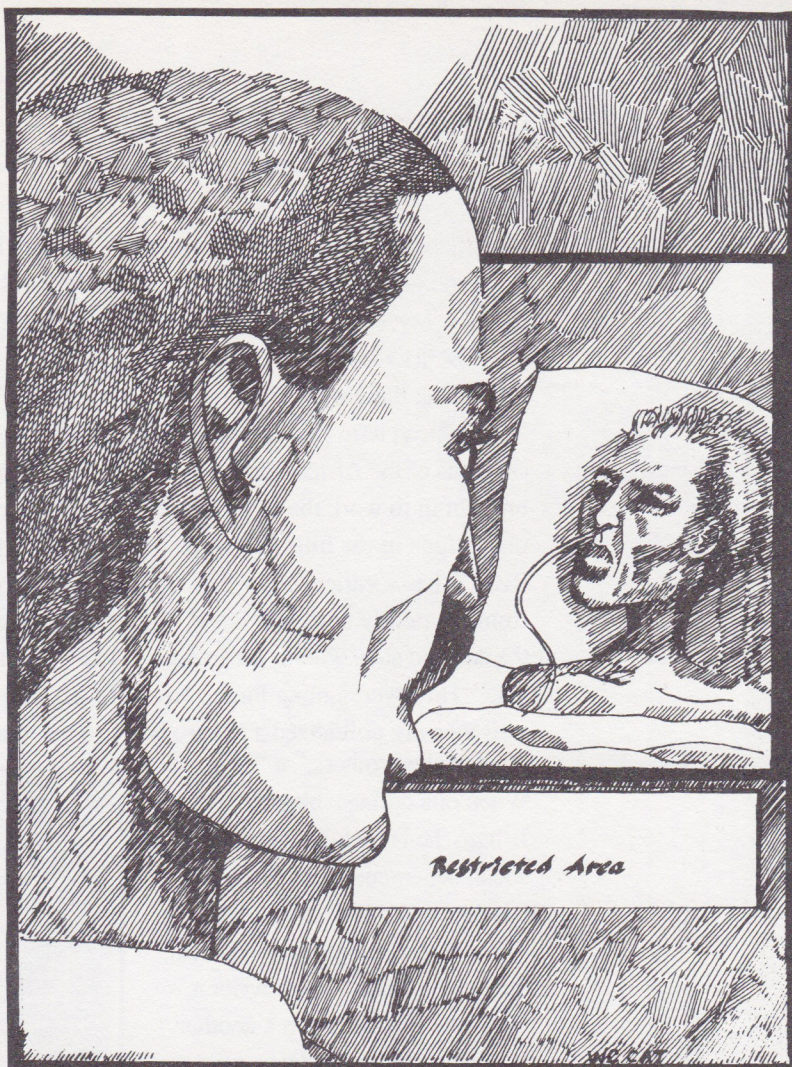
When he discovered that he wasn't, he was beaten, raped, robbed and dumped on the highway. Home was in Washington D.C. and he was stranded in suburban Maryland. Fortunately, he was near my home. I told him to walk over and I would look out for him. When he finally got there, I crept to the side door and gave him some money to get home. He never dragged again.

He returned to school and got a part-time job. But Bobby could not sit still. He decided to join the army! I was not surprised when he returned two months later.

I was single again and our weekends of partying and pursuing men continued. I settled on a guy named Lionel. Bobby went from Reggie, to Butch, to Michael and so on. Then he met Lee and fell honestly in love. Soon, they were living together in suburban Maryland. When Lee received a job assignment in Illinois Bobby went with him. They lived there for 18 months.

When Bobby came home in October of 1985 for a visit. I noticed he had lost weight. He attributed it to a cold. We had a reunion and partied with friends. He was to return in December for the Christmas holidays. I looked forward to seeing him again.

However, the next time I saw him he was in the hospital. On Christmas day he was admitted to D.C. General Hospital suffering from what was said to be a bad cold. Two days later, he was in and out of consciousness. He had pneumonia and he had AIDS. On



"On the evening I visited him, it was sterile chaos. Bobby was in a sealed off room as if he were an alien from outer space."

the evening I visited him, it was sterile chaos. Bobby was in a sealed off room as if he were an alien from outer space. Thank God he was conscious. I looked through the small glass window in the door. He looked almost like a stranger.

He was horribly gaunt and a complexion that was once light was now dark as death. The sight sent a chill through me. I looked into his eyes and saw fear and a longing for life. I looked into his eyes and saw a friend. I mouthed a silent "Hello." I even forced a smile.

Throughout Bobby's stay in the hospital, I was cold to his lover Lee. I blamed him for Bobby's illness. Bobby was dying and he was walking around well. I would not talk to him. He was forced to communicate with me through other people.

continues on page 37

by Miles K. Bell

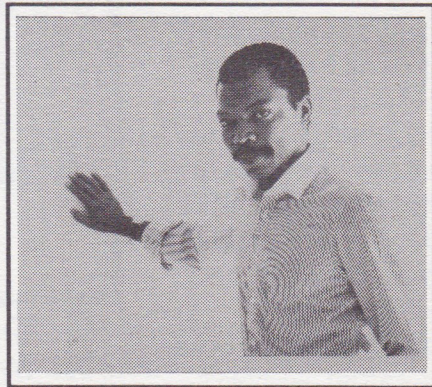
Twenty pages into the publication I offer you my belated welcome to BGM 4. I welcome you here because BGM 4 started here. Before everything there was Ji'baro. Its a Puerto Rican term and describes descendants of the African slaves brought in to work the sugar cane plantations in the hills of Puerto Rico. It has a variety of translations from the mildly negative "hick" to the decided slur "Puerto Rican nigger." However, among Puerto Ricans who are politicized a Ji'baro is "one of the brothers," a "blood." When one defines himself as a Ji'baro he is making a political and social statement about pride in his Blackness and his African heritage.

The poem is the most powerful, the most beautiful, ever written from one Black man to another. It was created in the late sixties, a period when many African Americans were aggressively developing a nationalistic viewpoint. It was "Nation Time."

It vividly depicts a relationship, a bond that is prevalent among African-American men but is rarely, if ever, shown. And while it is not a gay poem and the author is not gay man, the entire work has erotic overtones.

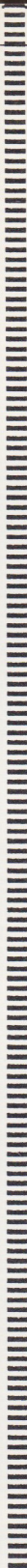
Though he *makes* love to the daughter, he is *in* love with the father. It's a love so deep, so encompassing he demands you "forget about self." A love so sure he declares "I'll never let you go."

The Ji'baro's spoken to here are African American men, those millions that aren't written about in newspapers or novels. Those strong, proud, beautiful, good men like your father, your brother, your lover, your friend, yourself. Jibaro is a celebration of all of us.



Nancy Alvarez

Sidney Brinkley
Editor



JÍBARO

My pretty nigger

Father of my yearning for the soil/the land

The earth of my people

The earth brown of my skin

The thoughts of freedom

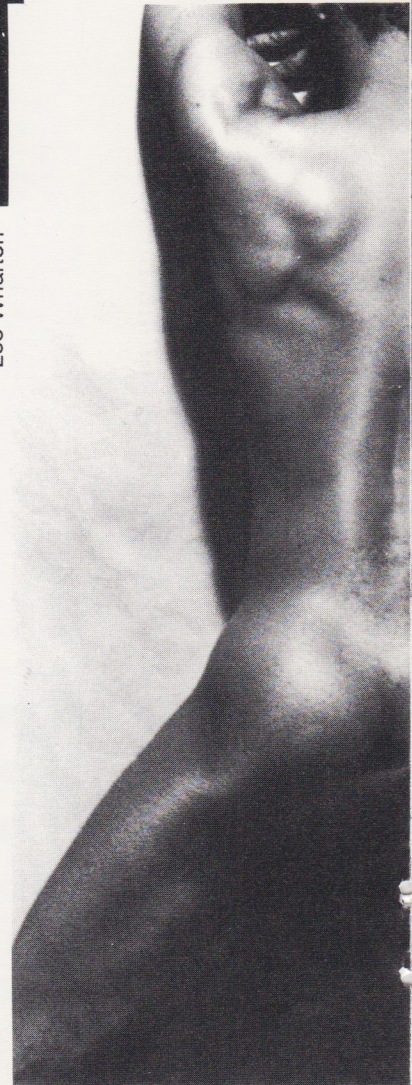
That butterfly through my insides...



Sidney Brinkley

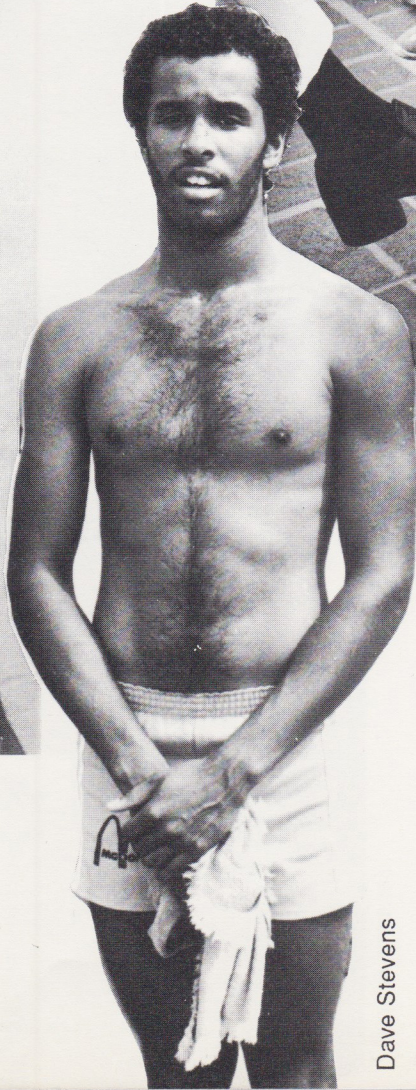
I dig you!

Lee Wharton



Dave Stevens

Sidney Brinkley



Dave Stevens

Sidney Brinkley





Lee Wharton

I love the curve of your
brow, the slant of your
babies eyes...

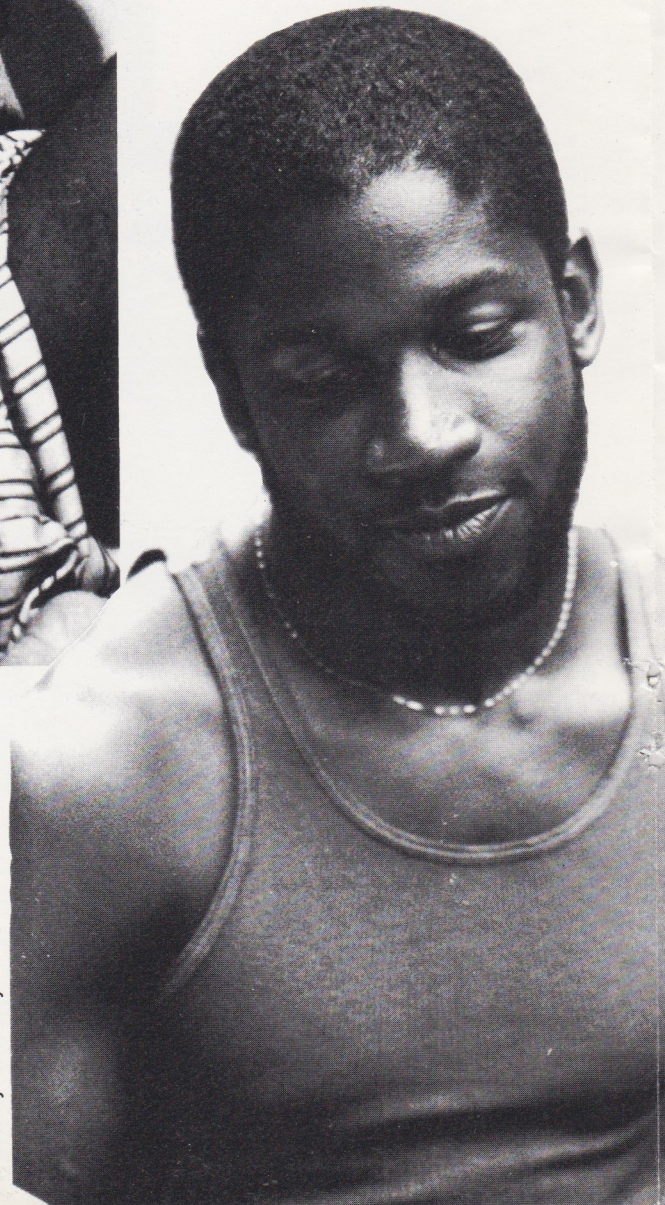
I ride with you on
subways
touch shoulders with you
in dances...

Yea, you my cold nigger
man...and I love you
cause you mine...

JÍBARO

My pretty nigger.

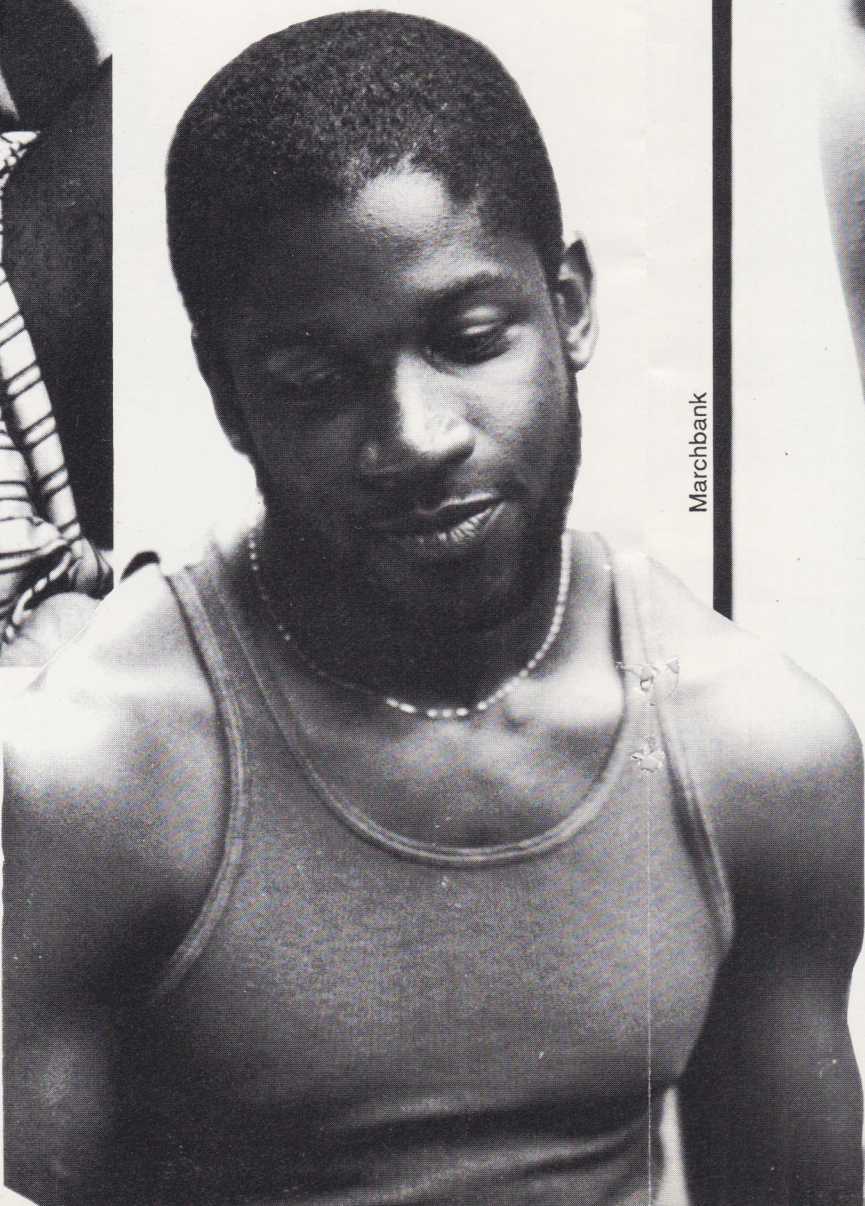
Sidney Brinkley





Lee Wharton

I love the curve of your
brow, the slant of your
babies eyes...
I ride with you on
subways
touch shoulders with you
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Yea, you my cold nigger
man...and I love you
cause you mine...



Marchbank

BARO
pretty nigger.

Sidney Brinkley

Lee Wharton

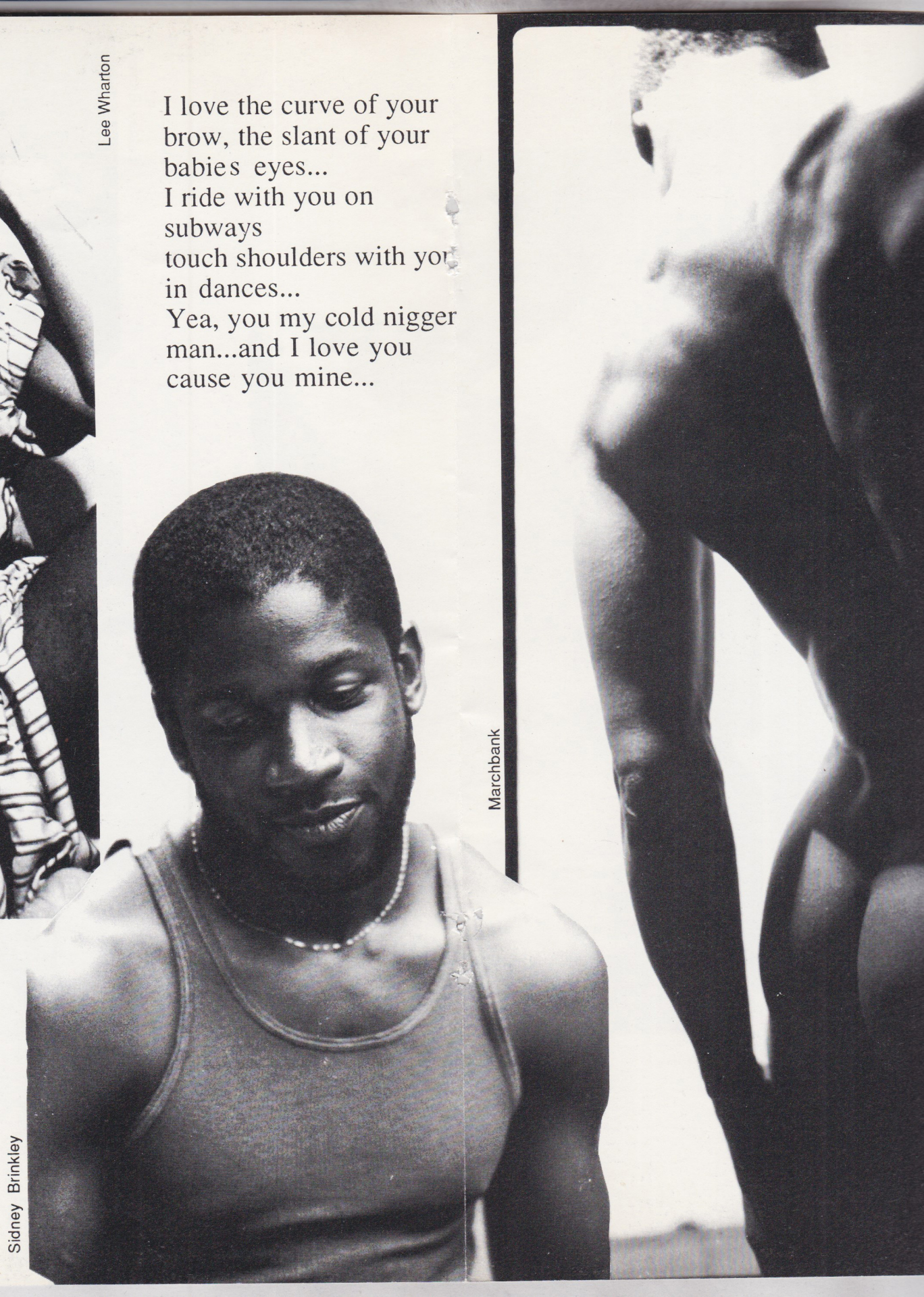
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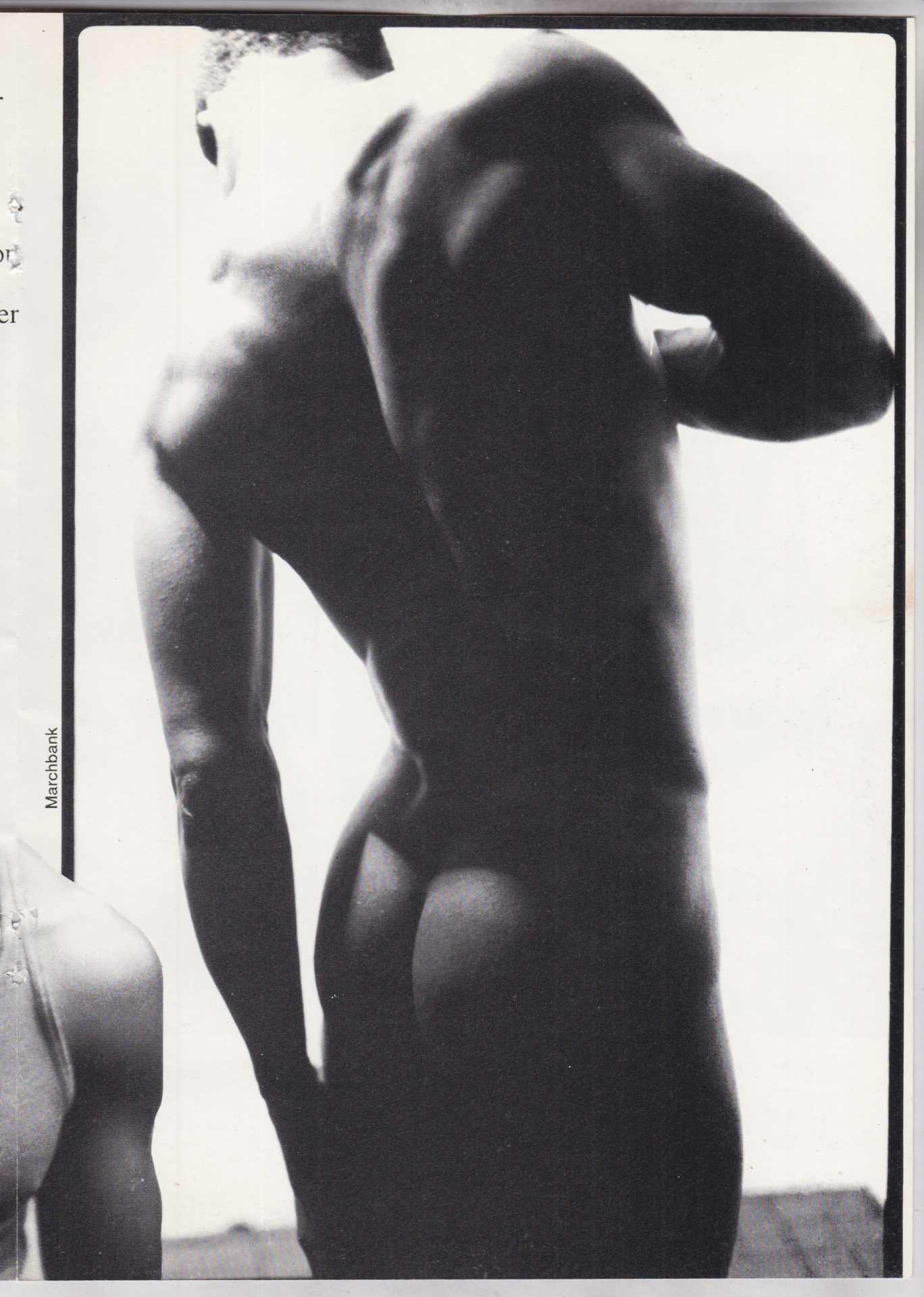
Marchbank

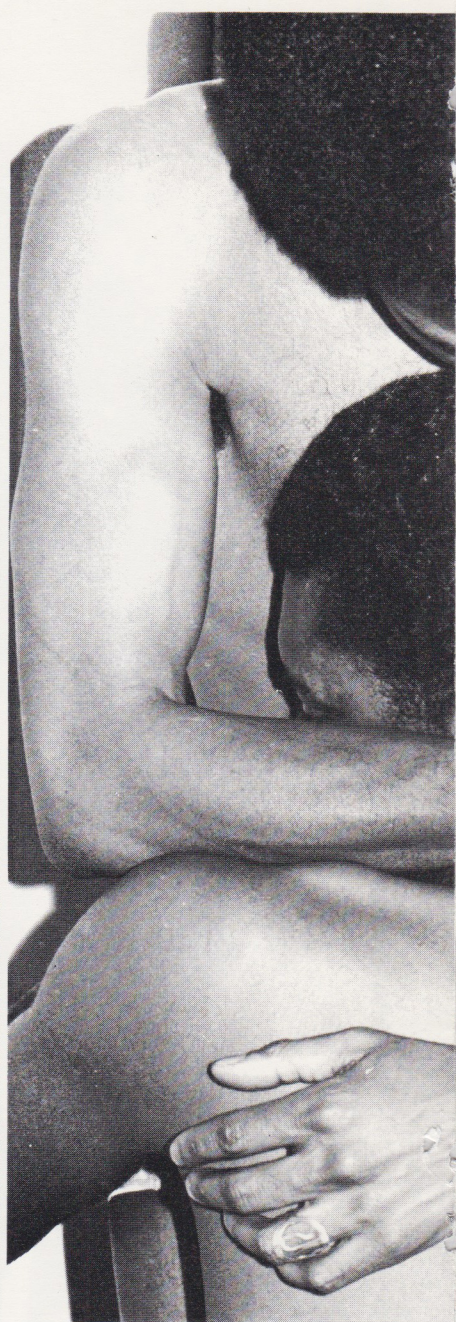
Sidney Brinkley



er

Marchbank





And I'll never let you go

And I'll never



Ron Simmons

let you go

And I'll never let you go

Jibaro/mi negro lindo
del bosque de cana/de los caciques de luz
Tiempo es una cosa comica

Jibaro/my pretty nigger
Father of my yearning for the soil/the land
The earth of my people
Father of the sweet smells of fruit in my mother's womb
The earth brown of my skin
The thoughts of freedom
That butterfly through my insides.

Jibaro/my pretty nigger
Sweating bullets of blood and bedbugs
Swaying slowly to a softly strummed
5-stringed guitar
Remembering ancient empires of
Sun Gods and Black Spirits
And things that were once so simple
How times have changed men
How men have changed time
"Unnatural," screams the wind, "unnatural."

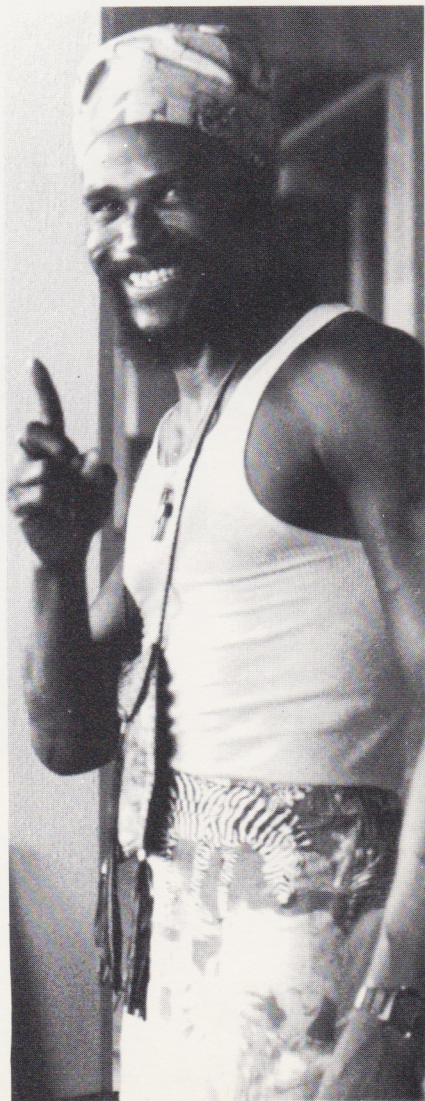
Jibaro/my pretty nigger man
Fish smells and
Cane smells and Fish smells and
Cane smells and Tobacco
And oppression makes even God smell foul

As foul as the bowels of the ship
That vomited you up on the harbors of a cold, metal city
To die.
No sun No sand No palm trees
And you clung to the slimy ribs of the animal called
The Marine Tiger
In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Gost, Amen.

Jibaro/did you know you my nigger?
I love the curve of your brow/the slant of your babies' eyes
The calves of your women dancing
I dig you/you can't hide.
I ride with you on subways
Touch shoulders with you in dances
Make crazy love to your daughter

Yea/you my cold nigger man
And I love you 'cause you mine
And I'll never let you go
And I'll never let you go
Forget about self, we together now
And I'll never let you go

-Felipe Luciano
Copyright © 1968



THE BGM AWARDS

THE BGM HALL OF FAME SYLVESTER

THE BEST OF WASHINGTON

BEST BAR

THE BRASS RAIL

476 K St. N.W.

The neighborhood bar that's in nobody's neighborhood. It's in the mix. Drag queens, college students, professionals, and ordinary folks, hanging out. A stunning rebirth of a gay landmark.

BEST SOCIAL CLUB

ENCORE

They are gaining a reputation for giving very nice affairs that are neither overdone nor pretentious.

BEST D.J.

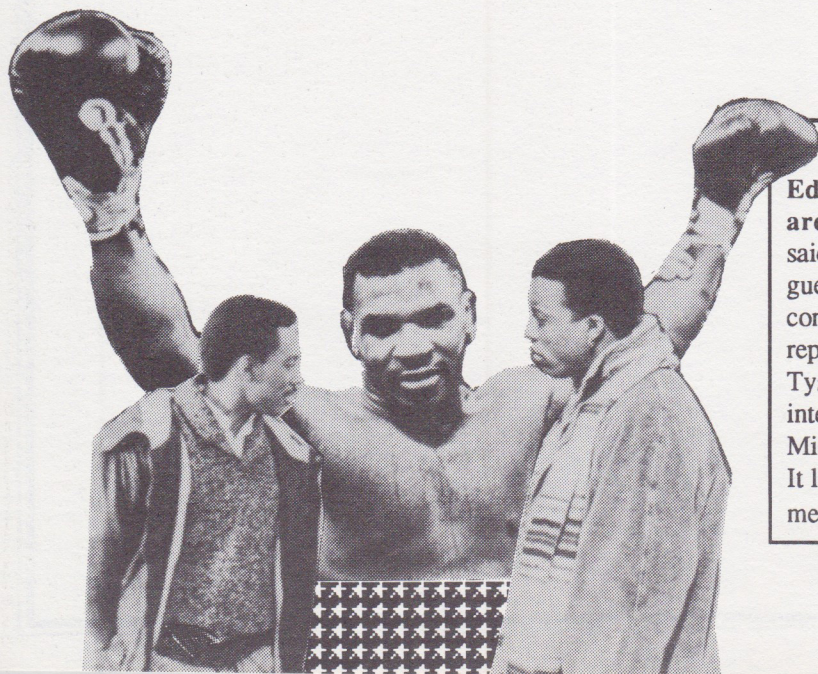
Dennis of "Etiquette"

The man is hot!

D.J. HALL OF FAME

Tito of "The Clubhouse."

He's packed up his turntable and retired. But For years the only reason to go The Clubhouse was to dance to the hottest music in town, and most of the time it was played by him.



BEST RUMOR

Eddie Murphy and Arsenio Hall are fighting over Mike Tyson said actor Jim Brown during a recent guest stint on Hall's show when the conversation turned to rumors. Arsenio replied, if he were so inclined, Mike Tyson would not be his type. He'd be interested in somebody like George Michael. Will someone alert BWMT? It looks as if Arsenio Hall's a potential member.

WOMEN WE LOVE

Dionne Warwick

By using her influence, her talent and her time in the fight against AIDS she proves that's what friends are for.

WOMEN WE DON'T

Donna Summer

During the early days of the AIDS crisis, after the former "Bad Girl" became "born again" and a republican, she made the well documented remark that AIDS was God's way of punishing gay men because of their lifestyles. This while she lived a life of ease that gay dollars had made possible. Her career has never been the same.

MEN WE ADMIRE

FATHER GEORGE STALLINGS

He's intelligent, articulate, self-confident, strong, assertive and aggressive. *Whatever* he did in his personal life in no way lessens the validity of the issues he raised about the Catholic church. This lone African-American man rocked their world. It was inevitable they would strike back, that they were aided and abetted by other Blacks, that's what's disheartening.

MEN WE DON'T

THE ONE WHO GAVE THE STORY TO THE WASHINGTON POST.

There he is laying up with his white lover conspiring against a Black man making a stand for Black rights. A modern day house nigger.



COUPLE OF THE YEAR

MAGIC JOHNSON & ISIAH THOMAS

For the past two years these two have kissed their way through the playoffs and the All Star game. Lest anyone get the *right* idea, Isiah remarked in an interview "I'm all man." Those are the best kind, but what does that make Magic?

BEST SINGER **LUTHER VANDROSS**

As his latest album, "The Best Of Love," proves Luther has the most beautiful voice on record. Unlike some other stars who are gay he has not gone out of his way to give the impression that he is straight. Once during a performance given around the start of the year, a woman in the audience said her new year's resolution was to marry him. "Marry me!" he replied incredulously, "honey, you's a resolution somethin."



He towers over everyone else. There are no words that accurately gauge the man's talent. "Awesome," "fabulous," "dazzeling," fall far short as any of the 4.4 million who witnessed his record breaking world tour would attest. But until new words are invented, those will have to do.

MICHAEL JACKSON, BGM #1.





the government, the press and the medical establishment and white gays were all to happy to join in and start singing. Finally, the focus was off of them.

The New York Native, a widely read white gay newspaper often praised for its AIDS coverage, began calling the disease "African Swine Flu." Suddenly, Black people were the reason they were sick rather than their own behavior.

Now AIDS has been designated a disease of "the urban poor," the catch all synonym for African-Americans and Hispanics. Black leaders such as Jesse Jackson say AIDS is "devastating the Black community." *Devastating?* Words are powerful. And we have to be carefull when using the language of AIDS.

There are well over 30 million African Americans in the United States. Approximately 30,000 have been reported as having AIDS to date. Even if one doubled that figure, to account for all those not yet counted, and all suddenly died, the Black community would hardly be devastated to the point that one wouldn't see Black people walking the streets.

More Blacks die from heart attacks, from cancers, from strokes every year than have ever died of AIDS. The average life span for African Americans is five to ten years less than whites. It's a situation that some have compared to genocide. If the Black community is being devastated, then AIDS had better take a number and stand in line.

The number one cause of AIDS among African Americans is IV drug use. Repeatedly injecting HIV infected blood into your vein is one of the most effcient means of contracting AIDS. The overwhelm-

ing majority of African Americans, gay, straight or otherwise have never and will never shoot drugs.

AIDS is a serious problem among Blacks and whites but we have to keep it in perspective, for our own social and phycological well being.

That's not easy when it seems as if every reporter on the AIDS beat is in the Black community with notepads and videocams. One rarely reads of the disease in reference to white gay men anymore. One could think they didn't even have it anymore or at least that it wasn't a major problem.

The fact is white gay men make up 45 percent of the total cases of AIDS. They make up 75 percent of the cases among gay men.

The fact is American white gay men out number every other single catagory in the world. Yet AIDS in America is continually Black identified. But let a Black person white identify it and whites all but foam at the mouth. Truth is, its nobody's disease. But if white people wont deal with the truth then Black people will have to deal with the facts.

continued on page 36

BLACKJACK

TAKING MATTERS IN HAND

“We are looking for Black men who are willing to forgo anal sex completely. Men who are willing to be physically in good shape and emotionally positive.”

As one response to the rising incidence of AIDS among African American gay men, a group formed in the summer of 1986 in Los Angeles. It was a private social club that would promote safer sex among its members, mainly through masturbation. The group was christened "BlackJack." Its logo was the Jack of spades.

To attract members carefully worded ads were placed in various newspapers asking interested African American men to meet at a certain fast food restaurant and look for the table with the Jack of spades

on the edge and someone would be there to meet them.

Prospective members were informed that, on a regular basis, the group meets, socializes and provides opportunities for safer sex.

To get away from any semblance of sleaze the meetings are usually held in a suite of a quality hotel. The BlackJack newsletter recently advertised an upcoming meeting at a luxurious resort in Palm Springs.”

As one participant in the L.A. group related, "it's just like any other party you would attend with people in small groups talking or dancing except the men don't have on any clothes."

There are now several BlackJack groups around the country including San Diego, San Francisco, Cleveland and Chicago. All come under the umbrella organization BlackJack of America, Inc.

Max Smith, who founded the Chicago group in February of 1988, describes his organization this way:

“We are looking for Black men who are willing to forgo anal sex completely. Men who are willing to be physically in good shape and emotionally positive.”

Smith says the Chicago group meets once a month and currently has about 15 members.

As in L.A., meetings are held in a hotel suite. Members are charged \$5.00 at the door and

drinks and light snacks are provided.

Some men may be nude while others walk around in jock straps or underwear. In a separate room there are sex videos and a place where members can engage in sex.

The principal activity is masturbation: group, solo or mutual. Oral sex is allowed because the group feels there is no evidence of the AIDS being caught in that manner.

However, anal sex is not allowed and BlackJack is quite serious about maintaining its safer sex stance. At one gathering in L.A. two members were caught engaged in anal sex, in a closet. Both were asked to leave and thrown out of the group.

CAN WE TRUST THE MEDICAL ESTABLISH- MENT?

1932

In the early thirties syphilis was running rampant through white America. The Public Health Service (PHS) began an experiment on six hundred, illiterate, African American men in Macon County, Alabama.

Four hundred were watched to see what the effects of untreated syphilis would be on their mortality rate. The other two hundred were used as control subjects.

Initially, the study was to last for one year. However, at the end of the year the PHS decided to continue the study on a long term basis, to end only after the autopsy of the last survivor. Long after effective treatments for syphilis were discovered the men were refused treatment. In the forties they were denied penicillin; in the sixties they were denied antibiotics.

It was not until 1972, after the story was featured in *The Washington Star*, that the study was reluctantly ended. By then it was much too late for the men and their families who had lived with unchecked syphilis for forty years.

The Public Health Service is now known as The Centers for Disease Control. (CDC)

1988

On May 29th of 1988 the story of an experiment involving African-American women came across the wires of the Associated Press.

As part of a study, two hundred and forty-five pregnant African-American women from a Chicago ghetto were given a drug by two Cook County Hospital physicians.

The study was to determine if Dilantin, a drug used to treat epilepsy and stroke patients, could reduce fetal stress in women giving birth by Caesarean section, according to Terrence Hansen, the hospital's director.

The women were given the drug between September of 1987 and January of 1988. All were given Caesareans, whether they needed it or not, and the babies were tested to see how much stress they suffered. After the study was completed, and the research was being reviewed, the issue of consent forms was raised.

"It is against hospital policies not to obtain the patient's signed consent, in this case, they did not," Hansen said after the story was leaked to the press.

Two babies born to the 245 mothers died, but both deaths "resulted from complications because of significant prematurity, the drug was harmless" said Hansen.

He refused to identify the two doctors who administered the drug but said the hospital's Executive Staff recommended one year's probation for both. "However," he continued, the final decision on what punishment, ease, "if any," would be made by the Cook Coun-

ty Hospital board of trustees.

When *The Washington Star* broke the story about the CDC experiment it said the agency saw Blacks as part of a "vast experimental resource for the government." This is the same agency that is now heavily involved in AIDS research. This is the same agency that says "trust us."

As the case involving the women shows it's not just huge government agencies that see African-Americans as an experimental resource. If the drug involved was so "harmless" then why didn't they try it on 245 pregnant white women?

If the experiment had been conducted on 245 dogs, animal rights activists from one end of this country to the other would have been screaming, loud. It would have been featured on the front page of every paper and discussed by Ted Koppel on "Nightline."

But it didn't happen to dogs. It happened to Black women and Black women, *Black people* are expendable.

Public clinics and hospitals like Cook County have access to large numbers of African Americans and Hispanics, many of whom are poor, under educated and considered virtually powerless. Such institutions routinely ignore patients rights.

Recent government policies require both to test for HIV and keep a record of it. They also test new borns for HIV and, if positive, a record is kept of the mother. No consent is sought. The only choice the patient is given is whether he or she wants to be told the results.

For whatever reasons they seem to be particularly interested in AIDS among Blacks. One often reads of some new foray into the community by white researchers. We cannot unquestionably accept

the results of said research. The medical establishment has been something less than forthright when dealing with us.

In terms of AIDS there are many experimental drugs that need to be tested on human subjects. Public hospitals provide care to many AIDS patients. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that African American and Hispanic AIDS patients are being given experimental drugs without their knowledge.

Undoubtedly, there are those who will say "they wouldn't do anything like that." However, at this point it's no longer about what they wouldn't do. They've already done it. Now more than ever we will have to be vigilant, especially when dealing with public hospitals. None of us can afford to be trusting because it's been proven many times the only people that care about our lives are us.

BGM

When A Friend Dies

continued from page 19

Then Bobby died. I was devastated. I cursed him; I cursed his lover. I got drunk and cried.

The wake was a nightmare. The illness had so ravished his body that there was no viewing. Instead, portraits of him rested on a podium. Prior to the program's start I made certain to be rude to Lee. As I had proceeded to enter the church he had tried to talk to me, to make amends. He wanted us to support one another as friends for Bobby's sake. I cursed him out and fists were about to swing when friends intervened.

However, when he spoke at the services his presentation honoring Bobby was extremely touching. The

music he had taped, "It's so hard to say goodbye to yesterday," from the movie *Cooley High* had been Bobby's favorite and moved everyone. Lee and I made up immediately following the wake. We found an isolated room in the church and talked. I apologized for my behaviour and he accepted with a genuine smile and a comforting hug.

But I was bitter for months following the funeral. I had lost a friend. We had shared so much and now he was gone and all I had were memories.

BGM

BREAKFAST FOR KUMAL





by Bob Williams

Roy rolled up the sleeves of his black and white striped silk robe with his slender, banana yellow fingers and put a pot of water and a heavy black iron frying pan on the stove and set the gas jets on low.

When the pan became hot, he put in thick, meaty, strips of bacon and patties of sausage. When the water began racing like wild rapids, he added grits and stirred them until they bubbled like lava. He took five eggs from the wire basket over the sink and cracked them into a green and pink striped bowl that his mother once used for her cake batters. After scrambling them to a custardy softness, he covered the bowl to keep them warm.

He went to the narrow pantry and tucked two bamboo place mats under his arm, stuffed forks, spoons and knives into his pockets and picked up

two plates, with matching cups and saucers, and two white linen napkins. He arranged them on the cafe' table by the window that overlooked the courtyard below.

He retied his robe, looked into the mirrored doors of the pantry and smoothed back his hair and brushed his mustache with his finger. *Not bad for a 32 year old man*, he thought.

He noticed the empty coffee cups and realized he forgot to make the coffee.

—Maybe he doesn't want coffee, he muttered to himself as he headed for the bedroom. But when he reached the living room he stopped and tried to decide whether he should go back and make some.

He was once asked to choose a period he would have liked to have lived in. Without hesitation he had answered, "the thirties." The room had a "depression era" look about it. The floor was covered with a frayed "antique" Persian rug. A brown, overstuffed, horse hair sofa sat by a bricked in fireplace. A floor model radio stood between the two windows that looked out onto the street.

His cat, Tabanta, sensed him and jumped up against the bathroom door mewling and scratching, wanting to be let out of her prison. Roy ignored her and walked into his bedroom.

Kumal sat on the edge of the rumpled bed with his thick, muscled, ebony skinned arms raised high above, making them move his thin pink pullover over his close cropped head.

—You're not going? I made breakfast for you.

—Yeah, goin' to see my son. She got pissed las' time I said I was comin' ta see him...an' didn't, Kumal said as he pulled on his underwear.

—I thought we'd watch videos and

then go over to the fireworks later on.

Kumal stood and jumped a little as he zipped up his tight jeans, then stepped into his shoes.

—Jumped up crazy on me...talk'n 'bout not let'n me see him.

—Can I call you? Roy asked as he went to his night table for a pencil and pad.

Kumal glanced then turned away, fixing his dark brown eyes on the blue light of the VCR's clock. Roy held out the pad and pencil. Kumal took it, wrote down some numbers and gave it back.

—Do you want mine? Roy asked as he held out a slip of paper with his telephone number on it.

Kumal glanced at the paper, then at Roy and then out into the living room. He took the paper and walked out of the bedroom.

—Gotsta go.

Roy followed behind him.

—You sure you won't have something? he asked touching Kumal's arm as they stood in front of the kitchen doorway.

—What time is it? he asked, looking into the kitchen.

—It's only nine-thirty, Roy answered, smiling.

—All-right...what you got?



Roy re-bundled the thick files from the New Orleans division and then carefully folded the long stream of green and white striped printout sheets he had had run off.

He was pleased that he had found errors buried among the figures and memorandums that they had supplied. Thanks to his diligence, Zarroll's Restaurant Inc.'s only Black accountant, the company had saved thousands in federal taxes.

He looked across his big, neatly arranged desk and smiled at the ornate silver frame that held a photograph of his smiling mother. He imagined her hug-

ging and kissing him as she whispered, *good son, good*. Even now her approval still meant a lot to him.



In the crowded and suddenly quiet mail room of Hendley, Smuthers, Cranston and Feinberg, a cold stream of sweat trickled down the right side of Michael "Kumal" Johnson's face as he stood beside his bald, red-faced, trembling supervisor.

They were being asked to explain, to an angry and bourbon breathed Mr. Hendley, why the manila envelope he was dangling in front of them had not been delivered. Kumal kept his eyes fixed on the floor as his supervisor gazed into the fluorescent squares in the ceiling.

—Gentlemen, both of you ass-holes are on my shit list. Get the hell out of my sight! Hendley shouted as he swaggered out of the room.

Though nobody said a word Kumal felt every eye on him as he walked back to his position on the sorting desk. The din slowly rose to its usual fever pitch.

Why hadn't the supervisor said something, he thought. He knew I don't even pick up on that floor.

Just then someone on the other side of the sorting desk handed him a telephone message. It was from Marla, his girl friend and mother of his three year old son. He went to the employees lounge and called her.

—What you want? he said angrily as soon as she answered, I told you don't be call'n me here.

—Where else I'm gonna call you? Basketball courts don't have no phones...'stead of playin all the time, you better be gettin your ass a better job!

—Don't be tell'n me what I better do.

—And you better come over here tomorrow too, she continued.

—Girl I told you don't be tell'n me what I better do.

—Somebody better...that little money you be givin me aint shit!

—I give you what I got.

—and don't think I'm gonna do without much longer either. If he asks me again I swear I'm gonna marry him and get the hell outta here.

—If you do that I'll....

She hung up before he could finish, leaving him angry and worried. She'd again mentioned an old boyfriend, just out of the army and after her to marry him and move away.

Kumal returned to the mail room and finished his shift, then, sullen, he boarded the bus for home. When it made its regular stop in front of Terry's Bar and Grill, two willowy Black drag queens in bright, floral printed sun dresses ran out and onto the bus.

Kumal had not been in Terry's for months. As the bus turned the corner he glanced back at the bar's red neon sign. He decided to come back later.



As soon as he got in from work Roy took a nap and woke up slightly after 10:30 pm, just as the air conditioning on his side of the building shut off. He opened the windows, pulled down the screens and went to take a long, cold shower.

As he stood in front of his bedroom window drying himself, he waited for a cooling breeze that did not come.

He looked out over the roof tops. A full moon was slowly rising. It looked to be only a short plane ride away.

I said tonight, tonight, I'm gonna fiiiiiind me somebody, toniiiiight. Sylvester screamed from one of the apartments below. A string of fire crackers popped off in the distance.



Leigh Avenue bordered the core of the city and after the riots swept through town in the late sixties the avenue had the appearance of a mouth that had had all of its teeth knocked out. Once elegant and expensive dress salons, furriers,

jewelry stores and restaurants had become dark and dingy porn shops and two dollar peep shows. Then developers moved in, uprooted the old buildings and replaced them with glass towers.

—We'll make Leigh Avenue the city's show piece again, touted the mayor.

But the owner of Terry's had not sold out and in the center of a row of new office building stood the decaying bar. Years ago, on any late Saturday evening or Sunday afternoon, you were sure to find the *creme de la creme* of the city's Black gay men huddled inside.

You dressed when you went to Terry's then, wore your suit and your diamonds and sipped champagne from fluted glasses. Now, after years of neglect, the bar was in a state of disrepair and for many it had lost its appeal, except for its staunch clients and those looking for a hustler or other easy pick-ups.

When you entered through the basement level the first thing you saw was a wall covered with the likeness of Patti Labelle, head tilted back, red lips opened wide, holding one of her piercing high notes, threatening to shake the building down to its foundation.

The bar was already crowded when Roy arrived and after he finally got his can of Miller's, he squeezed his way towards the wall with Patti's face. He scanned the crowd as he sipped his beer.

First his eyes locked in on a tall light brown skinned man who's receding hairline reminded him of how his own would probably look in a few years. He looked away and caught the eye of an elderly man in a grey suit and eyeglasses giving him a gold capped, toothy grin.

Roy smiled back but made ready to move to the other side of the room when he met the hard gaze of a young, dark skinned man with a close cropped haircut. The man's stare did not soften

even after Roy broke into a broad smile, a smile of one who had just lost playing "stone face" with a tough opponent.

They stared at one another until the man winked. Roy walked over to him.

—Hi, he said extending his hand, I'm Roy.

—Kumal, the man answered as he shook Roy's hand with a firm grip.

Jody Watley's "Real Love" filled the room and the crowd shifted as people began moving towards the dance floor.

Roy pressed up against Kumal and felt the hardness of his body as he fought to hold his position against the human wave. They smiled at each other.

—Wanna dance? Roy asked, wanting to see how Kumal moved.

—No.

—Want a drink?

—No, that's all-right.

—Don't dance. Don't drink. What do you do? Roy asked with a grin.

—Fuck you like a woman, is what Kumal wanted to snap back. His complexion reminded him of Marla.

—You like video's? asked Roy

—They all-right...what you got?

—Lots of movies from the thirties and almost all the Amos 'n Andies.

—Who?

—Amos 'n Andy...you never heard of them?

—No, but it's hot in here, anywhere else is better.

—Then, let's go. Roy said.

They pushed through the sludge of hot, slow moving bodies until they were on the avenue. They silently walked towards Roy's car, arms lightly touching, as if magnetized. Stop lights turned quickly for them, making the ride to Roy's apartment almost nonstop.

—Where's the bathroom? Kumal asked as soon as they entered the door.

—Over there, Roy said, pointing "Want a soda or something?"

—Just water.

Kumal walked into the bathroom and closed the door. Roy went to the kitchen

and poured a glass of soda for himself and water for Kumal. He sat the glasses on the coffee table then turned the radio to a jazz station where a bassist was plucking out the melody to "Body and Soul." Roy sat on the sofa and slipped off his shoes as Kumal joined him on the couch.

—Are you a Muslim?

—No.

—Then how did you get a name like Kumal?

—From the dudes I play ball with.

—So then, what's your name?

—Kumal.

—I mean what does your mother call you?"

—Kumal.

—Come on, what's your name? Roy asked, slightly irritated.

—It's Michael. You live here by yourself?

—Yes, just me and my cat.

—You got a cat? Kumal shouted, looking around the floor.

—What's wrong, don't you like cats? Roy asked as he began softly calling Tabanta who came running out of the darkness and rubbed her gray furred back against Kumal's leg before running over to Roy.

—Damn it, Kumal shouted, shaking his leg as if something hot had just passed through them. Roy scooped up the cat and deposited her in the bathroom and closed the door.

—Sorry 'bout that, he said as he returned.

—So tell me about yourself. What do you do? Roy asked.

—I work in the mail room of a law office.

—Like it? Roy asked as he curled one leg up under himself.

—It'll do till I get into mechanics school in September.

—Mechanics school? Why not college? The question put a sheet of silence between them.

Roy pushed his knee into Kumal's out stretched leg then bent over to sip his soda. He moved closer and inched his damp finger tips under Kumal's pullover and pinched a hardening nipple.

His other hand moved over his hard, hairless chest and up towards the nape of his neck. He moved his face closer but Kumal pulled back, avoiding Roy's parted lips.

—I'll be right back. Roy said as he got up and walked into his bedroom. He took off his clothes and put on his bathrobe. As he tied his sash he walked over to the window and looked down onto the moonlit courtyard filled with party streamers, Japanese lanterns and a child's wading pool.

The soft voice of Sarah Vaughn drifted in from the living room. He walked to the doorway.

—Turn off the radio and come on in.

Kumal walked up to him and Roy unfastened his jeans as Kumal pulled his shirt over his head. Roy let his robe drop to the floor revealing a body that gym work was beginning to define.

As Kumal's penis begin to stir Roy backed away, opened the night table and pulled a box of rubbers and a tube of lubricant.

Kumal pulled him to him and Roy dropped what he was holding onto the bed. He cupped his lips over Roy's ear, pushed the tip of his tongue inside and huskily whispered,

—Come on just let me put the head in.

—Wait a minute, Roy said, reaching for the tube of lubricant. He rubbed some on himself then on Kumal.

Kumal lifted him and drove himself into Roy's body. Roy pulled away in pain but Kumal, braced tight against him, pushed deeper and pumped franti-

cally for a couple of minutes then shouted as he came.

Roy was pinned under a hard breathing Kumal until he pulled himself out and laid on his back.

They lay silently in the heat of the room until Roy leaned over and ran his hand over Kumal's sweat covered chest and kissed his wet forehead. Kumal covered his eyes with his forearm, as if shielding them from the sun.

Roy got up and walked into the bathroom. He washed himself then wet a wash cloth for Kumal.

He slowly wiped him down. He pulled a sheet up around them and snuggled close. The wind rustled the trees below and billowed the curtains as they fell asleep.



—So... why don't you like cats? Roy asked as he fixed Kumal's plate.

—Never liked 'em. My ma said they suck baby's breaths outta them...and they be sneaky too...you got coffee?

—I can make some...and you believe all that?

—Yeah.

Roy handed Kumal his plate then sat down and watched as he hunched over and wolfed down his food, as if he feared someone might take it from him. Roy smiled to himself. His mother's oft repeated advice to his sister ran through his mind.

—Don't no high yella girl like you need to be messing round with no light skinned men. Get you a Black one. They make better babies, its something in their stuff and love making, She had said. Little did she know her advice had also influenced Roy.

—Still want coffee? he asked, getting up.

Police Chief Refuses to Make Public Statement

By Chris
The police chief of the city of New York, John J. O'Connor, has refused to make a public statement regarding the recent death of a young man, James Baldwin, who was found dead in his apartment. O'Connor's refusal has caused a great deal of controversy, as many people believe that the police should be more forthcoming in their handling of such cases.

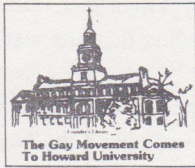
NCBG Holds Meeting on Bar Discrimination

By Chris
The National Black Gay and Lesbian Association (NCBG) held a meeting in New York City to discuss the issue of discrimination in bars. The meeting was attended by a number of prominent figures in the community, and it was decided that the NCBG will continue to fight for the rights of all people, regardless of their sexual orientation.

Zimbabwe-Rhodesia: The Struggle Goes On

By David Price

The struggle for independence in Zimbabwe-Rhodesia continues. The Rhodesian government has refused to negotiate with the African National Congress (ANC), and the war has raged on. The people of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia are suffering, and the international community has failed to take any effective action to end the conflict.



The Gay Movement Comes To Howard University

Homophobia in the Black Community
One Woman's Story - From Here to There
James Baldwin Just Above My Head

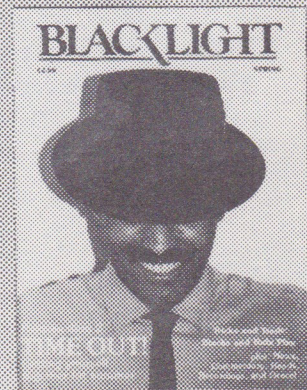
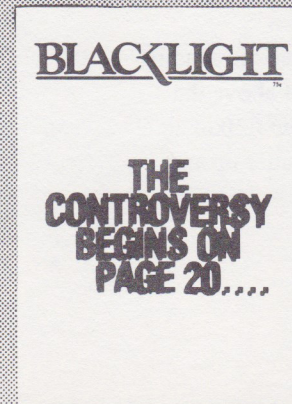
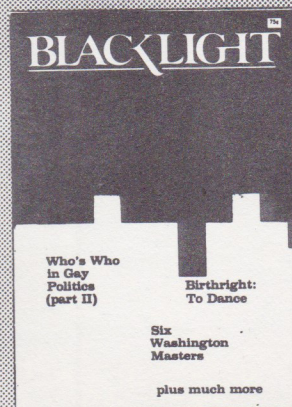
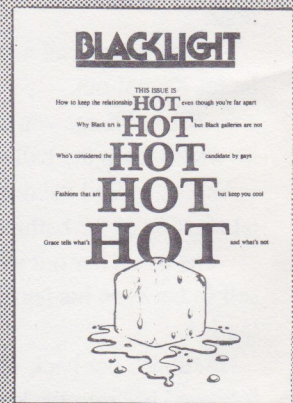
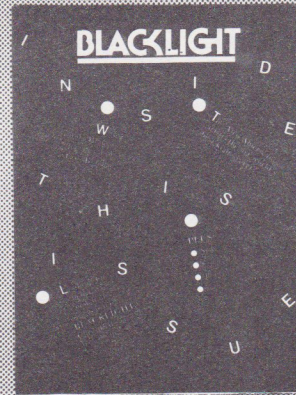
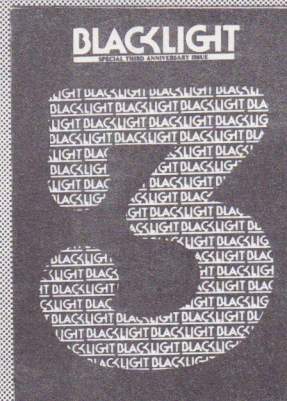
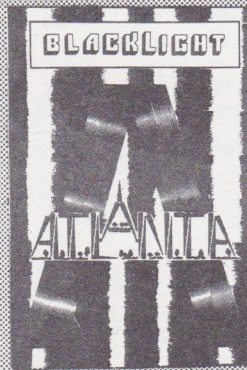
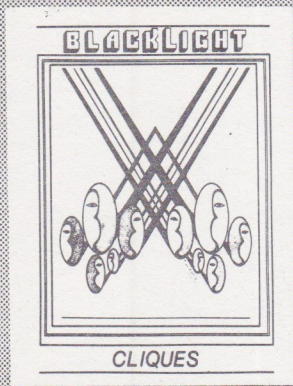


by Bill Noyes

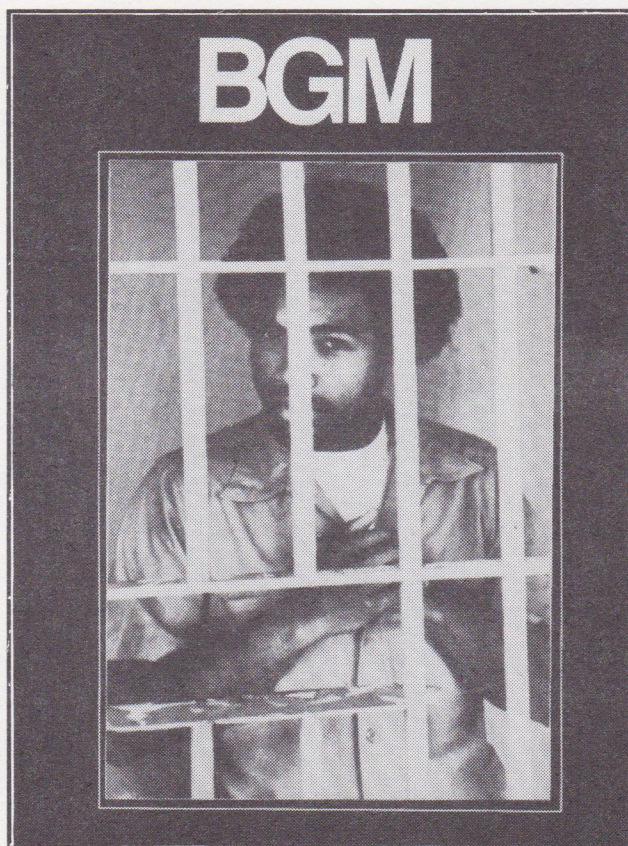
Black gay men and women are often faced with a double discrimination. They are not only Black, but they are also gay. This makes it difficult for them to find a community where they can be accepted and loved for who they are.



The Third World Lesbian and Gay Conference in Pictures.



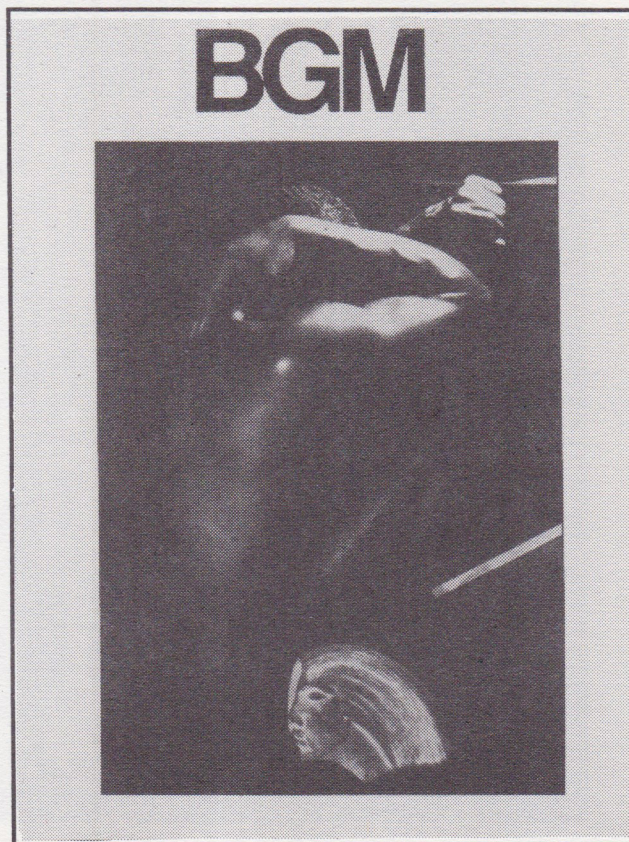
ABOUT THE BLACKLIGHT PRESS



BGM:1

The Blacklight Press has been publishing for the African-American gay audience since 1979 beginning with the ground breaking publication, BLACKLIGHT. Under founding editor, Sidney Brinkley, what began as a four page newsletter evolved into a magazine. It was the first African-American gay magazine to be published in the United States. In 1985 the last issue of BLACKLIGHT was published and The Blacklight Press (BLP) was formed. In March of 1987 the first issue of BGM, a magazine for Black gay men, was published.

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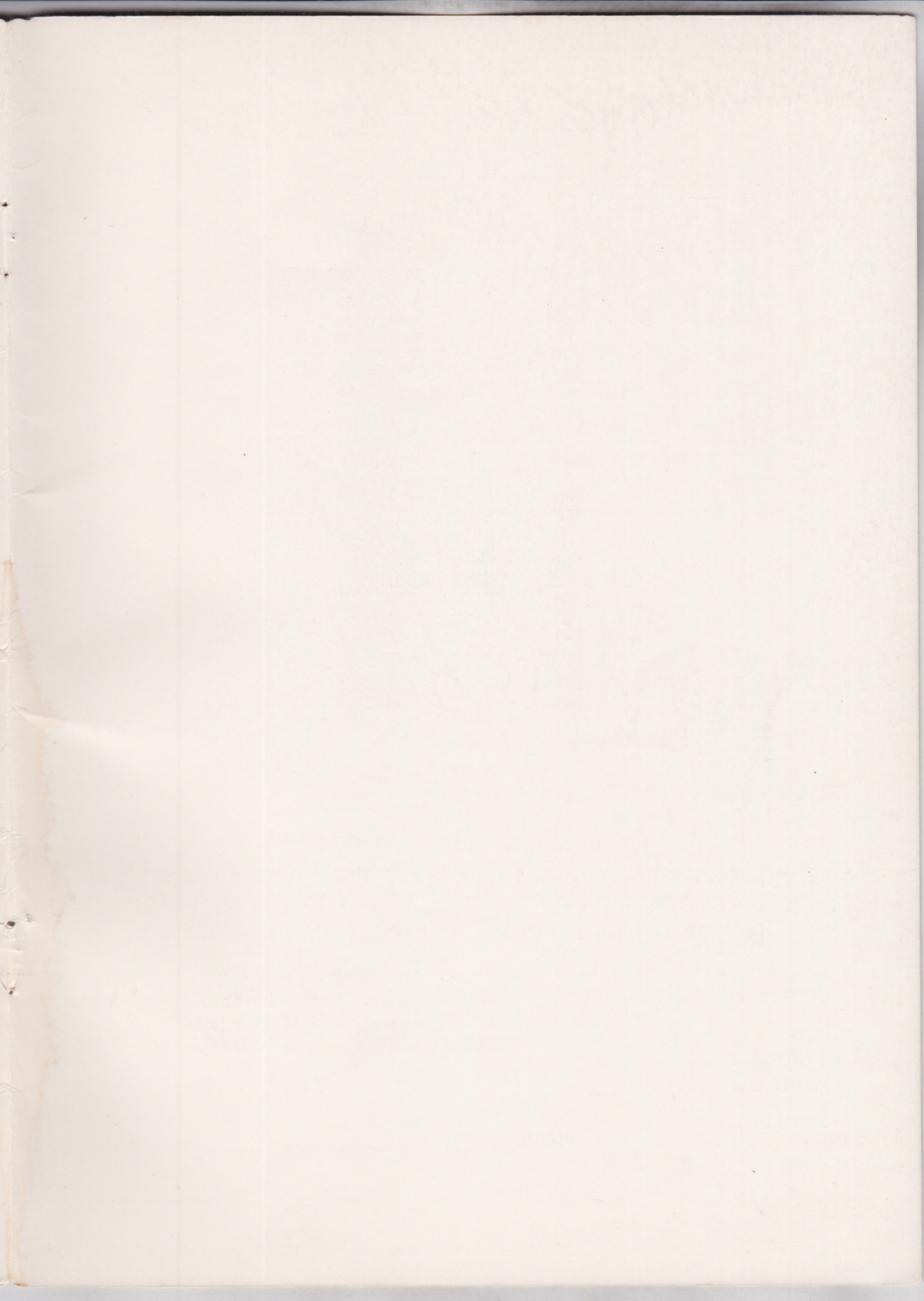
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